DICE KILLING ARC

Higurashi
WHEN THEY CRY

STORY BY
RYUKISHI07

ART BY
KARIN SUZURAGI

Higurashi
WHEN THEY CRY

DICE KILLING ARC

Higurashi
WHEN THEY CRY
DICE KILLING ARC

CONTENTS

1 THE WORST POSSIBLE WORLD 3

2 THE DOTS ON THE DIVINE DICE 49

3 ALL ALONE 93

4 BERNKASTEL 135

5 MOTHER AND CHILD 169

FINAL CHAPTER: ONE WORLD 215

YOU'RE JUST BEGGING TO BE BEATEN AGAIN!
HERE I GO, SIRS!

HEE-HEE, KEEP YOUR EYE ON THE THE BALL, KEIICHI-KUN!
DAMMIT, WHY AM I THE ONLY ONE IN A RIDICU-LOUS SWIM-SUIT!?

WE'VE FINALLY WON THE HUNDRED-YEAR BATTLE.

SUMMER 1983.

I'VE ALWAYS DREAMED OF PLAYING WITH MY FRIENDS AT A SWIMMING POOL, AND NOW WE'RE ACTUALLY HERE.

AND THAT'S HOW I KNOW...

...BUT I'VE WANDERED THROUGH A STAGGERING NUMBER OF DAYS TO FINALLY ARRIVE AT ONE LIKE THIS.

IT MAY SEEM LIKE A SMALL DREAM...

...WHAT DEEP HAPPINESS CAN BE FOUND IN ORDINARY, UNEVENTFUL MOMENTS.

YES.

NOW WE CAN HAVE DAYS LIKE THIS FOREVER.

.....

THIS IS THE IDEAL WORLD WE'VE WON.

CHAPTER 1:
THE WORST POSSIBLE WORLD

Bread fell down from heaven.
Some lamented loudly that the bread was not meat.

Meat fell down from heaven.
Some lamented loudly that they preferred the bread.

God came down from heaven.
He will make water fall down for a time
until everyone knows what will make them happy.

Frederica Bernkastel

ミーン MIIIN (BUZZ)
ミンミンミン... MIN MIN MIN

KEIICHI LOOKED SO ADOWABLE! OHHH! ☆

ZAAAAAA (WHOOOSH)

I, MION SONOZAKI, WILL REGRET FOR THE REST OF MY LIFE MY FAILURE TO BRING A CAMERA!

I'M GRATEFUL SHE LOANED ME SOMETHING, BUT IT MAKES NO SENSE WHY SHE'D BRING A PAIR OF SWAN BRIEFS!

SHE MUST'VE BEEN PLOTTING SOME EXCUSE TO GET THEM ON ME ANYWAY!

REMEMBER TO THANK MII FOR LENDING YOU SOME SWIM BRIEFS, KEIICHI, SIR.

YOU'RE SUCH A LITTLE FOOL, FORGETTING TO BRING YOUR SWIMSUIT TO A SWIMMING POOL.

ZAAAA

ｱｱｱｱｱｱ

ZAAAA (WHOOSH)

ああア

BUT IT WAS A LOT OF FUN. I THINK RENA IS CONTENT. I THINK!

I CONCUR!

I ENJOYED IT SO MUCH, I HATE FOR IT TO END.

IT WAS PRICELESS, THE LIKES OF WHICH I HAVE NEVER EXPERIENCED IN ALL MY HUNDRED YEARS.

TODAY WAS AN AWFUL LOT OF FUN.

GU (GRIP)

WHOA! RIII-KAAA!

TAKE THAT, SIR!

ZAAAA

DON (BUMP)

I'M GONNA BEAT YOU, SIR!

MEW!

DON'T HORSE AROUND ON THE ROAD! IT'S DANGER-OUS!

THIS OLD MAN'S NOT GONNA LOSE!

WHAT'S THIS? A RACE!?

RIKA.

SU (FWSH)

IT'S DANGEROUS TO GO SO FAST, SIR.

HANYU!

ZAAAAA (WHOOSH)

RIKA! PLEASE WAIT!

MEW! I WON'T LET ANY-ONE ELSE HAVE FIRST PLACE, SIR!

WHAT, ARE YOU SCARED? SISSY.

I-IT'S NOT THAT, SIR!

OKAY, SCAREDY-CAT, JUST BE QUIET AND WATCH.

HA (GASP)

はっ…

ZAAAAAA

MEW! I'M NOT GOING TO FALL FOR THAT ONE, SIR!

RIKAAA! THERE'S A CAR COMING!!

BLOOOO (VRRRRM)

ANYONE WHO'S LIVED HERE LONG ENOUGH KNOWS THAT.

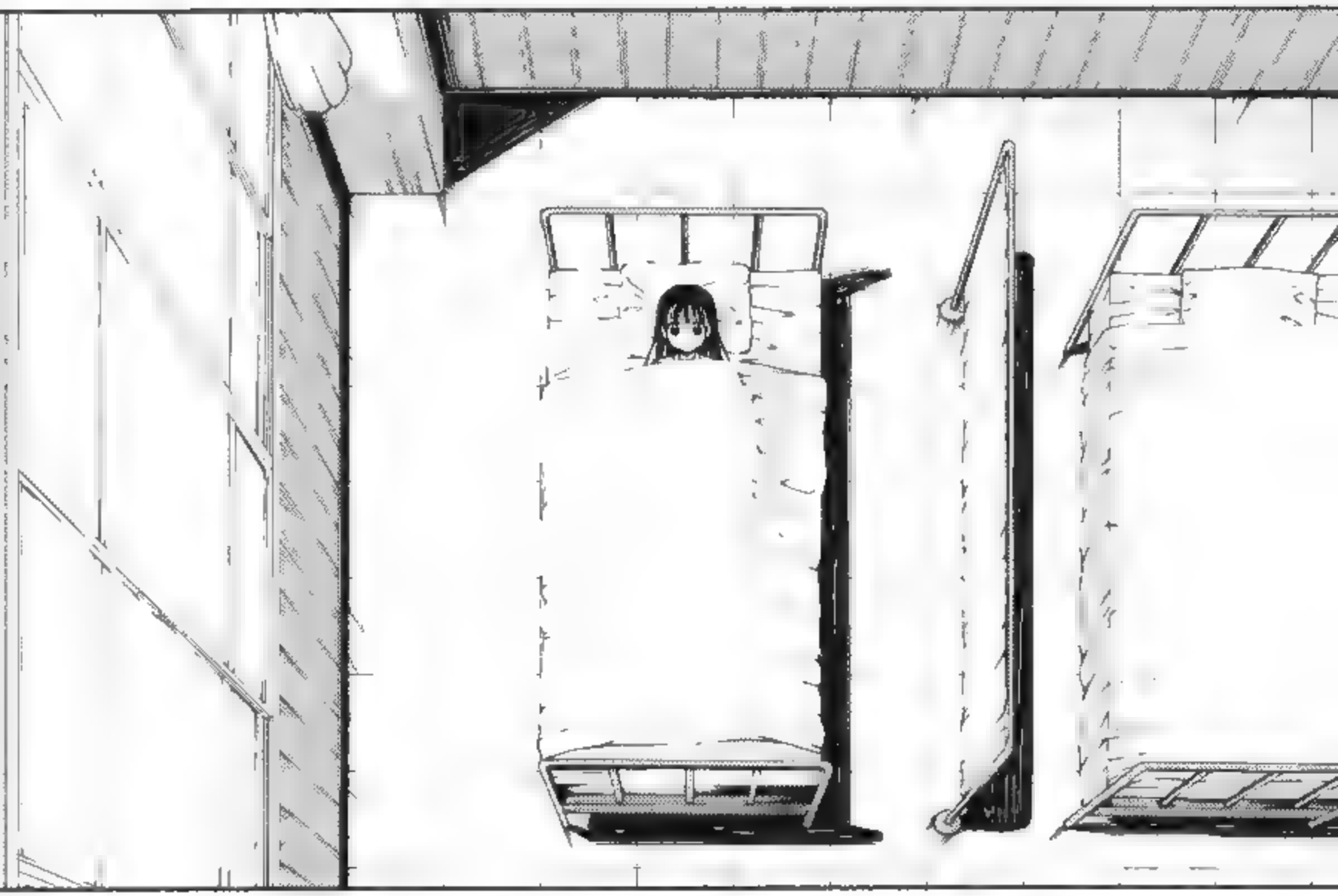
THIS IS A PUBLIC ROAD, BUT CARS ALMOST NEVER COME THROUGH HERE AT THIS TIME OF DAY.

—WHAT?

RI-KAAA!!!

DON CHAM

HA
(GASP)



AH-HA-HA-HA...

MIIIN
(BUZZ)
MIN
MIN

HOW... DID I GET HERE...?

THIS IS...

...THE SCHOOL NURSE'S OFFICE?

ARE YOU ALL RIGHT, FURUDE-SAN?

KII (CREAK)

GU (SSK)

SATOKO ...

THE DOCTOR IS ON HIS WAY FROM THE CLINIC.

CHIE ...

HA (GASP)

HOW IS SATOSHI HERE...?

HOW ...?

SA... SATO-SHI...

OH, THANK GOODNESS. WE WERE SO WORRIED.

...AT IRIE CLINIC UNDER-GOING TREAT-MENT.

HE'S SUP-POSED TO BE ...

WHAT IS HE DOING HERE AT SCHOOL .....?

.....

THAT'S NO WAY TO APOLO-GIZE!

SATOKO-SAN, TELL FURUDE-SAN YOU'RE SORRY.

...I DIDN'T THROW IT THAT HARD.

...SO HOW ...?

BUT I WAS RIDING MY BIKE BACK FROM OKINOMIYA ...

I GUESS SATOKO DID SOMETHING THAT PUT ME IN THE NURSE'S OFFICE...

HA (GASP) ...!

GO ON, SATOKO-SAN!

AND SATOSHI IS HERE.

BECAUSE NO ONE COULD TELL IF "HOJO-SAN" MEANT SATOKO OR SATOSHI.

CHIE ONLY CALLED SATOKO "SATOKO-SAN"...

...BEFORE SATOSHI DISAPPEARED IN JUNE OF 1982.

NO...

THAT MEANS ...

I WENT BACK TO THE PAST AGAIN!?

I'M IN A WORLD BEFORE JUNE 1982!?

SO WHY ...?

BUT I FINALLY HAD MY IDEAL WORLD ...

GU (CLENCH) ...

IT WAS THAT ACCIDENT.

SHE TOOK ME TO A TIME AND PLACE BEFORE THAT... A WORLD BEFORE I BROKE FREE FROM MY DEAD-END DESTINY...

BUT NOT TO THE TIME BEYOND JUNE 1983.

AND HANYU PROBABLY TOOK ME BACK AGAIN.

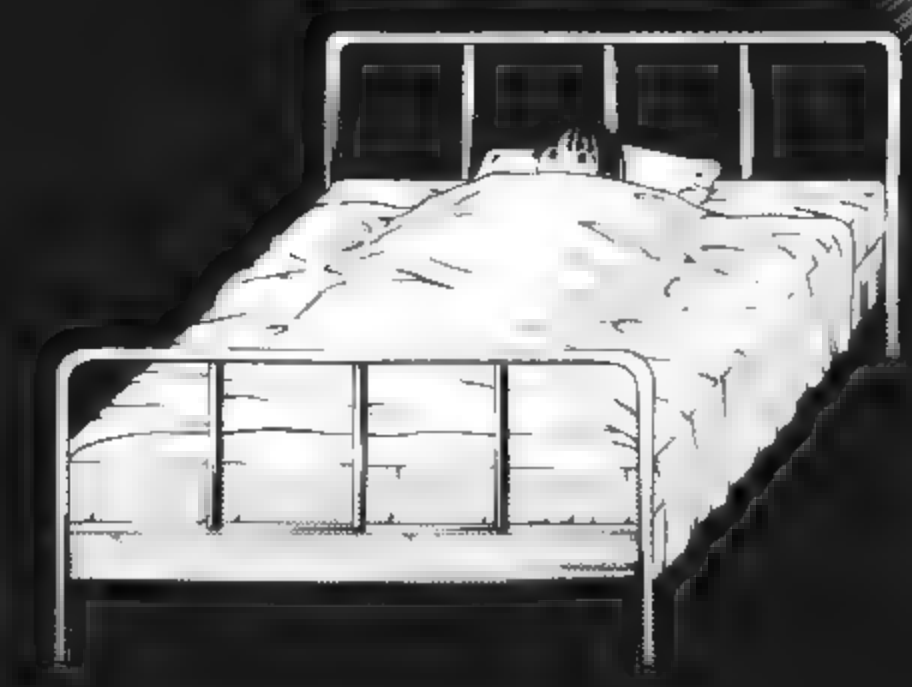
I DIED IN THAT ACCIDENT ON MY BICYCLE.

HOW... COULD THIS HAPPEN...?

I GOT CARRIED AWAY... IT WAS JUST A LITTLE BIT OF FUN ON MY BIKE...

I HAD AN IDEAL WORLD...

AND NOW I HAVE TO GO BACK AND START ALL OVER AGAIN...?



.....

COME ON, SATOKO. YOU HAVE TO APOLO-GIZE.

SATOKO!

BUT YOU WERE THE ONE STANDING IN MY WAY, STARING OFF INTO SPACE!

FURUDE-SAN, I'M SORRY FOR THROWING A BALL AT THE BACK OF YOUR HEAD!

DA (DASH)

SATO-KO!!

.....?

WHAT ...?

...

I'LL GIVE SATOKO A TALKING-TO LATER.

I'M SORRY, RIKA-CHAN.

TA (TAP)

I'M LYING HERE HURT... BUT SHE'S ACTING LIKE SHE DOESN'T EVEN CARE.

AND SHE'S NOT TALKING LIKE HER-SELF...

SATOKO'S ACTING STRANGE...

WHAT YEAR IS THIS? WHAT MONTH IS IT?

WHAT IN THE WORLD IS GOING ON?

USUALLY WHEN I GO BACK, HANYU IS ALWAYS RIGHT NEXT TO ME TO EXPLAIN WHAT'S HAPPENING IN THE NEW WORLD...

WHERE ARE YOU...?

HANYU...

THERE'S SOMETHING STRANGE GOING ON. I CAN'T UNDERSTAND IT...

SOMETHING DOESN'T FEEL RIGHT...

IRIE'S HERE?

SENSEI... THE DOCTOR FROM THE CLINIC?

ZA (ISW)

OH, SENSEI. I'M SORRY TO CALL YOU OUT HERE ON SUCH SHORT NOTICE.

SHE JUST REGAINED CONSCIOUS-NESS.

KON KON (KNOCK)

I'M SORRY TO HEAR YOU GOT HURT!

HELLO, RIKA-CHAN!

ギョッ
GYO (GADE)

YAMA-MOTO ...?

M-MEW ...

SO THE BALL HIT THE BACK OF YOUR HEAD?

MAY I TAKE A LOOK?

TAKE GOOD CARE OF HER, YAMAMOTO-SENSEI.

BUT I'VE NEVER MET THIS MAN IN ALL MY LIVES...

DOES YOUR HEAD HURT?

DO YOU FEEL DIZZY OR OFF-BALANCE?

NO, SIR.

IS HE A DOCTOR FROM IRIE CLINIC?

BUT FROM WHAT I CAN SEE, THERE DON'T SEEM TO BE ANY PROBLEMS!

I WANT TO DO A BRAIN SCAN.

HMMM! I'D BETTER TAKE YOU TO THE CLINIC JUST IN CASE.

.....

STILL, YOU CAN NEVER BE TOO CAREFUL. THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP.

WHAT IS THIS WORLD?

AH-HA-HA-HA-HA-HA

MIIN (BUZZ)

MIIN

MIN

HA! YOU'RE TOO SOFT! THE IRONCLAD RULE OF DODGE-BALL IS TO TAKE DOWN THE WEAK FIRST!

BUT YOU GO AFTER *THE* MION SONO-ZAKI RIGHT AWAY? BAD STRATEGY.

HA (GASP) はっ…

MII-CHAN, TAKE THIS!!

COME ON, MII-CHAN! YOU PLAY TOO HARD!

HI-YAH! THE NEXT SLOWEST ONE IS... YOU!

MOYA!

DON (WHAK)

RENA'S... HERE?

...THEN I'M SOMEWHERE BETWEEN APRIL AND JUNE OF 1982.

SO IF RENA AND SATOSHI ARE BOTH HERE...

AND SATOSHI DISAP-PEARED FROM THE VILLAGE IN JUNE THAT YEAR.

RENA DIDN'T TRANSFER BACK TO HINAMIZAWA FROM IBARAKI UNTIL APRIL 1982.

BURORORON (VRRRRMMM)

AH HA HA HA!

THEN I'VE GONE BACK ABOUT A YEAR...

SO WHY DOES EVERYTHING FEEL SO OFF...?

IT'S LIKE THERE'S SOMETHING VERY DIFFERENT ABOUT THIS WORLD...

MIIIN (BUZZ)

MIN

MIN

MIN

HA (GASP)

COME IN, AND LET'S GET THOSE TESTS DONE.

KII (CREAK)

THIS... IS IRIE CLINIC...?

BUT...

IT'S DEFINITELY THE SAME BUILDING.

THE WHOLE BUILDING FEELS OLDER AND IS SHOWING THE WEAR AND TEAR OF AGE.

AND I DON'T RECOGNIZE ANY OF THE NURSES...

...IT'S DIFFER-ENT...!!

ギゅっ!

GYUU! (SQUEEZE)

HMM, HEAD INJURIES CAN BE FRIGHT-ENING THINGS.

SHE GOT HIT IN THE HEAD WITH A BALL.

I THOUGHT I SHOULD TAKE A CLOSER LOOK JUST IN CASE!

OH DEAR, IS THAT YOU, RIKA-CHAN?

WHAT'S WRONG? DO YOU HAVE A COLD?

BUT YOU'RE YOUNG! YOU CAN TAKE A BALL OR TWO TO THE HEAD, NO PROBLEM!

WHAT IS THIS WORLD ...?

...WOULD BE BESIDE THEMSELVES WITH WORRY OVER ME... EVEN FOR JUST A LITTLE BUMP ON MY HEAD.

THAT'S WEIRD ...

ALL THE OLD FOLKS I KNOW...

SAVE US, OYA-SHIRO-SAMA!

SAVE US!

...

...TAKANO CLINIC...?

Takano Clinic

!

Takano Clinic

BA (FWP)

WHERE AM I ...?

Takano Clinic

DA (DASH)
ダッ!

COME ON, RIKA-CHAN, I'LL TAKE YOU TO THE EXAMINATION ROOM.

RIKA-CHAN!!

HAA (PANT)
はぁ

HAA
はぁ

THAT'S BEEN THE CASE IN EVERY WORLD I'VE BEEN IN...

TA (TMP)
タ!!

SIGN: IRIE CLINIC

IT HAS A FACILITY IN THE BASEMENT FOR RE-SEARCHING HINAMIZAWA SYNDROME.

THAT'S IMPOS-SIBLE... THIS IS IRIE CLINIC...

SIGN: TAKANO CLINIC

...NO...

N...

RIKA-CHAN, WHAT'S THE MATTER!?
DA (DASH)

PETAN (SLUMP)

...
SENSEI
...
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT? IS IT A DIZZY SPELL?
WE'D BETTER DO THOSE TESTS!

THEN WHAT ABOUT TAKA-NO ...!?

NO, NO IRIES HERE.
IRIE ...?

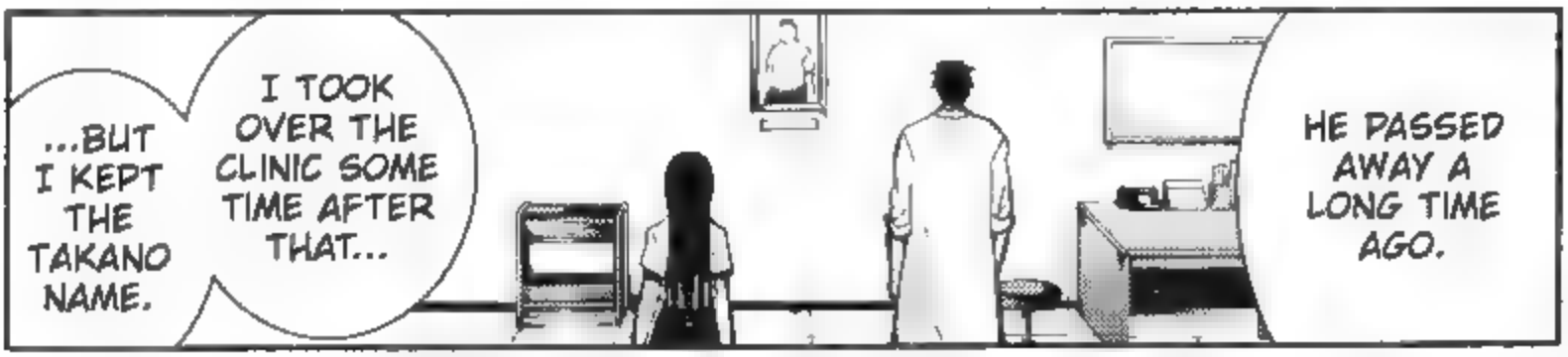
...IS THERE A DOCTOR HERE NAMED IRIE?

TAKANO ...?
YOU MEAN THE DOCTOR WHO BUILT THIS CLINIC?

HIFUMI TAKANO-SENSEI.

HE WAS A GREAT MAN. HE BUILT THIS LITTLE CLINIC FOR THIS LITTLE VILLAGE.

Dr. Hifumi Takano



...THAT LED MIYO TAKANO TO CREATE A DESTINY THAT LED TO MY MURDER.
IT WAS HER EFFORTS TO MAKE PEOPLE ACKNOWL-EDGE HIS RESEARCH...
THAT MUST BE THE MAN TAKANO RESPECTED AS HER GRAND-FATHER...

WE DON'T HAVE ANY NURSES BY THAT NAME.

TH-THERE'S NOT A NURSE HERE NAMED TAKANO ...?

A YOUNG WO-MAN?

TH... THEN...

.....

GU... (CLENCH)

YOU MIGHT FIND HIM IN THE PHONE BOOK.

FOREST SER-VICES ...?

HE'S IN FOREST SERVICES.

WHAT ABOUT OKO-NOGI?

WHAT ABOUT ME BEING THE QUEEN CARRIER ...!?

...WHAT ABOUT HINA-MIZAWA SYN-DROME?

BA BAM!

I THINK YOU'RE STILL A PRINCESS, RIKA-CHAN!

QUEEN?

HA-HA-HA!

NOTHING ABOUT NINAMIZAWA SYNDROME, THE REASON THEY BUILT IT.

NOTHING ABOUT IRIE OR TAKANO, THE REAL FOUNDERS OF THIS CLINIC...

WHERE THE HELL AM I?

...THIS MAN KNOWS NOTHING.

.....!

?

I-I HAVE JUST ONE MORE QUESTION, SIR.

NOW LET'S GET STARTED ON THOSE TESTS.

WHAT'S TODAY'S DATE...?

.....

HA-HA. YOU DO ASK STRANGE QUESTIONS ...

KATAN (CLACK)

カタ-ン...

THIS IS SHOWA 58... IN OTHER WORDS...

...JUNE 1983.

1983

6

5

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FR	SAT
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

7

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

JUNE
...
...
1983.

NO...
...
THAT'S IMPOS-SIBLE.

YORO (STAGGER)
ヨロ...

THERE'S NO WAY SATOSHI CAN BE HERE IN JUNE 1989.

BUT I SAW HIM!

AND NOT ONLY THAT...

SIGN: IRIE CLINIC

NO TAKANO.

THERE'S NO IRIE CLINIC.

NO OKONOGI ...

AND NO IRIE.

HANYU WON'T SHOW HERSELF EITHER.

THE OLDER VILLAGERS DON'T WORSHIP ME...

SATOKO IS STRANGELY UNCARING.

ANSWER ME!!

HANYU, WHERE ARE YOU?

DIFFERENT FROM ALL THE OTHER WORLDS I'VE BEEN THROUGH... TOO DIFFERENT.

IT'S DIFFER-ENT...

WHAT THE HELL IS THIS WORLD...!?

I'M GOING
TO GROW
UP NOW!

CHAPTER 2:
THE DOTS ON THE DIVINE DICE

MIIIN (BUZZ)
MIN
MIN
MIN

PI
PI (BEEP)
PI
PI

IT CAN'T BE...THIS WORLD...

...IS THE WORLD OF JUNE 1983?

WHAT IS WRONG WITH THIS WORLD...?

I'VE LOOPED THROUGH A HUNDRED YEARS' WORTH OF HINAMI-ZAWAS...

...BUT I'VE NEVER ONCE BEEN TO A WORLD LIKE THIS ONE.

IRIE AND TAKANO AREN'T HERE, BUT SATOSHI IS.

THERE'S SOMETHING STRANGE ABOUT THE WAY SATOKO TALKS, AND HANYU ISN'T HERE...

BUT I CAN'T TAKE YOU BECAUSE THE CLINIC IS OPEN NOW.

CAN YOU MAKE IT TO SCHOOL BY YOURSELF?

IF YOU'RE FEELING OKAY, YOU CAN GO BACK TO SCHOOL.

THERE, ALL DONE! I DIDN'T FIND ANY PROBLEMS WITH YOUR BRAIN SCAN.

KII (CREAK)

...MEW.

"MEW" DOESN'T ANSWER MY QUESTION. YES OR NO?

WHAT'S HAPPENING? I'M COMPLETELY OFF-KILTER...

MIIIN MIN MIN MIN

I'LL BE ALL RIGHT. ...I CAN GET BACK TO SCHOOL, SIR.

Y...YES.

BIKU (JUMP)

THAT WOULD NEVER, EVER HAVE HAPPENED IN ANY OTHER WORLD.

THE VILLAGERS HARDLY EVEN NOTICE ME...

タカノクリニック

SIGN: TAKANO CLINIC

WHY...?

...BUT THIS ISN'T THE HINAMIZAWA I KNOW...

THE SUN SHINES EXACTLY LIKE IT DOES IN EVERY OTHER HINAMIZAWA ...

GARA (SLIDE)

MIIIN (BUZZ)

MIN MIN MIN

WE'RE GLAD TO HAVE YOU BACK, FURUDE-SAN.

WE'RE STILL IN CLASS, EVERY-ONE! FOCUS ON YOUR WORK SHEETS!

M-MEW ...

...IN THE VERY BACK OF CLASS.

THIS IS MY SEAT IN THIS WORLD...

カタ！

KATAN (CLATTER)

IN THE PAST, I'VE ALWAYS SAT NEXT TO SATOKO.

BUT...

...IN THIS WORLD, SATOKO HAS SATOSHI BESIDE HER.

-TSUN (SNUB)

...!

I WONDER WHAT IT MEANS.

I DON'T SEE TOMITA OR OKAMURA ...

THE CLASS IS ONLY HALF AS BIG...?

THERE ARE SO FEW PEOPLE...

SHE'S CHECKING THE WORK OF THE GIRLS SITTING NEAR HER...

IT LOOKS LIKE SHE'S HER OLD, HELPFUL SELF.

AND SO IS RENA RYUGU.

MION SONOZAKI IS HERE.

WHERE IS HE?

SO WHAT ABOUT KEIICHI?

HA (GASP)
はっ...

IS KEIICHI... NOT HERE...?

BUT I DON'T SEE KEIICHI MAEBARA.

THIS IS JUNE 1983.

...WAS THIS EVER REALLY A GAME?

BUT...

IF HE'S NOT EVEN ON THE GAME BOARD...

KEIICHI WAS AN IMPORTANT KEY TO BREAKING DOWN MY JUNE 1983 DESTINY.

...THEN THIS GAME IS PRACTICALLY LOST BEFORE IT'S EVEN BEGUN.

AND THERE ARE NO SIGNS OF THE TOKYO ORGANIZATION OR HINAMIZAWA SYNDROME RESEARCH.

TAKANO ISN'T HERE.

IF THEY DON'T EXIST, THEN I'M NOT FIGHTING ANYONE.

EVEN THE DEAD END THAT KEPT ME TRAPPED IN THIS WORLD DOESN'T EXIST.

GOOD-BYE!

ALL RISE! BOW!!

KYA-HA-HA!

WHAT IS GOING ON IN THIS WORLD?

WHAT AM I SUPPOSED TO DO HERE...?

TAKANO ISN'T HERE, AND NEITHER IS KEIICHI.

SATOKO IS GIVING ME THE COLD SHOULDER ...

HEY THERE, RIKA-CHAMA!

MION, RENA ...

IS THIS... ABOUT... CLUB ACTIVI-TIES?

THEY WANT TO TALK TO ME AFTER SCHOOL!

CLUB ACTIVI-TIES?

CAN WE HAVE A MINUTE BEFORE YOU GO HOME?

...AHA!

SO WHAT'S THIS ABOUT A CLUB?

SO EVEN OUR CLUB DOESN'T EXIST IN THIS BIZARRE WORLD?

UH...

HERE'S THE LOG!

NO, YOU'RE ON DUTY TOMOR-ROW, REMEM-BER?

IN THAT CASE, RIKA FURUDE, I HEREBY GRANT THEE ENTRANCE INTO MY CLUB!

YOU WANT TO JOIN MY CLUB, RIKA-CHAN?

YOU'RE SO FUNNY, MII-CHAN, RIKA-CHAN.

AH HA HA HA!

MEW...!

GO... GOING HOME CLUB ...?

YOU KNOW THE "GOING HOME CLUB" ISN'T REALLY A CLUB.

YOU CAN'T EXACTLY CALL THAT "CLUB ACTIVITIES" ...

IS THAT WHAT MION MEANT WHEN SHE SAID "MY CLUB"...?

THAT MEANS ...

...THERE IS NO CLUB IN THIS WORLD.

WE LIVE IN OPPOSITE DIRECTIONS.

WE CAN'T GO HOME TOGETHER.

BUT EVEN IF WE ARE IN THE SAME CLUB, RIKA-CHAN, I CAN'T HAVE CLUB ACTIVITIES WITH YOU.

THEN MAYBE YOU AND I CAN HAVE SOME AFTER-SCHOOL "GOING HOME CLUB" ACTIVITIES TOGETHER, RIKA-CHAN.

SORRY, BUT I'M GONNA PASS.

I HAVE TO GO STRAIGHT HOME AND GET READY TO WORK AT MY UNCLE'S PLACE.

MAYBE SOMETIMES YOUR CLUB COULD TAKE A DETOUR TO GO HOME WITH RIKA-CHAN.

...THANK YOU, RENA, SIR.

WELL, SORRY, BUT YOU'LL HAVE TO EXCUSE ME.

THIS MIGHT BE MY CHANCE TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THIS WORLD...

GOING HOME WITH RENA.

I WILL!

YOU ESCORT RIKA-CHAN HOME, REINA.

...REI... NA...?

WHAT DOES IT ALL MEAN...?

RENA IS STILL GOING BY HER REAL NAME IN THIS WORLD...?

MIIIN (BUZZ)

MIN

MIN

MIN

REINA.

I KNOW THAT'S RENA'S REAL NAME.

BUT IN THE WORLDS I KNOW, SHE GAVE IT UP.

SHE DECIDED TO SAY GOOD-BYE TO ALL THAT MISERY AND START A NEW LIFE.

SHE CHANGED HER NAME TO "RENA" AS A SYMBOL OF THAT DECISION.

RENA THOUGHT IT WAS HER FAULT HER MOTHER LEFT AND LOATHED HERSELF FOR IT.

SHE MADE A MESS OF HER LIFE AND OF HERSELF...

...HOW ARE YOUR PARENTS DOING, RENA?

HM? WHERE DID THAT COME FROM?

IS THE PATH THAT LED HER HERE DIFFERENT FROM HER PATH IN THE WORLDS I KNOW?

THEY'RE BOTH DOING GREAT.

THINGS HAVE BEEN GOING BETTER THAN EVER SINCE DAD GAVE UP DESIGNING TO GO INTO BUSINESS.

THEY'RE GETTING ALONG REALLY WELL.

MOM IS STILL IN THE POWER POSITION, BUT THEY'RE REALLY IN SYNC.

HE'S WORKING ON THE BUSINESS END TO SELL THE CLOTHES THAT MOM DESIGNS.

...REINA NEVER MOVED TO IBARAKI? SHE NEVER HAD A REASON TO CHANGE HER NAME?

DOES THAT MEAN THAT IN THIS WORLD...

HER PARENTS' WORK IS GOING WELL.

REINA'S PERFECT FAMILY.

THE DICE IN THIS WORLD ROLLED HIGH FOR RENA...

SO HOW HAS SATOKO'S FAMILY BEEN?

SHE PUSHED HER PARENTS OFF A VIEWING PLATFORM AT A PARK.

IN THE OTHER WORLDS, SATOKO COULDN'T GET ALONG WITH HER STEPFATHER, AND THE STRESS PUSHED HER TO HER LIMITS.

THEN SHE WAS TAKEN IN BY HER ABUSIVE AUNT AND UNCLE...

...AND THINGS JUST GOT WORSE FROM THERE...

Y-YES, SIR. THAT'S WHY I WANT TO KNOW, SIR...

DO YOU WANT TO BE FRIENDS WITH SATOKO-CHAN?

HM? WHY WOULD YOU ASK ME THAT?

...IS SATOKO GETTING ALONG WITH HER FAMILY?

BUT NOW THEY GET ALONG SO WELL, IT'S LIKE THEY'RE EVEN CLOSER THAN REAL FAMILY.

IT WAS AWKWARD AT FIRST.

SATOKO-CHAN GOT A NEW FATHER...

.....

I'VE TALKED TO HIM A FEW TIMES. HE'S A GOOD MAN, AND HE WORKS HARD TO SUPPORT HIS FAMILY.

HER FAMILY SITUATION IS GOOD... AND SHE STILL HAS SATOSHI.

SO IS THIS A HAPPY WORLD FOR SATOKO...?

IS THERE NO VILLAGE-WIDE BULLYING IN THIS WORLD...?

THE HOJOS WERE AGAINST THE DAM WAR, AND THE WHOLE VILLAGE OSTRACIZED THEM TO MAKE AN EXAMPLE OUT OF THEM.

BUT... THEN, HOW ARE THE VILLAGERS GETTING ALONG WITH THE HOJO FAMILY?

HA (GASP)

ISN'T THERE A FEUD BETWEEN SATOKO'S FAMILY AND THE SONOZAKIS?

DIDN'T THEY GET MIXED UP IN THE DAM WAR...?

THERE WAS NEVER ANY FIGHT BETWEEN SATOKO-CHAN'S FAMILY AND THE SONO-ZAKIS.

FEUD? DAM WAR?

DAM WAR ...?

...I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT, RIKA-CHAN.

MAYBE IF WE HAD PUT UP ENOUGH RESISTANCE TO START A WAR...

...THIS VILLAGE'S FUTURE WOULD HAVE TURNED OUT VERY DIFFERENTLY ...

WHAT...?

ZA (SKFF)

MIIIN (BUZZ)

MIN MIN MIN

FEWER SHOPS ARE OPEN NOW.

A LOT OF PEOPLE CLOSED SHOP AND MOVED OUT EARLY.

OF COURSE IT IS. WE ALL HAVE TO BE OUT BY NEXT APRIL.

THE VILLAGE... IS AWFULLY EMPTY, SIR...

BUT YOU ALREADY KNOW ALL THIS, DON'T YOU, RIKA-CHAN?

IS THE VILLAGE ...?

YOU DON'T MEAN... NO...

OUT...?

HA (GASP)

NEXT YEAR, HINAMI-ZAWA...

...WILL BE AT THE BOTTOM OF A LAKE.

THE DAM PROJECT IS GOING FORWARD IN THIS HINA-MIZAWA?

THAT'S AWFUL ...

IT'LL BE ONE THING ONCE IT'S A LAKE...

...BUT I THINK IT WOULD BE SAD...TO WATCH IT SINK.

IT WILL TAKE A FEW DAYS BEFORE EVERYTHING IS SUBMERGED, BUT I DON'T WANT TO SEE IT.

NO ...

IT IS POSSIBLE ...

BESIDES, THIS VILLAGE MADE US WHO WE ARE. JUST BECAUSE IT'S AT THE BOTTOM OF A LAKE DOESN'T MEAN ALL IT'S GIVEN US WILL BE DESTROYED.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR MANY YEARS OF PATRONAGE

UNFORTUNATELY, WE CAN'T HALT THE NATION'S PROGRESS FOR OUR OWN SELFISH WISHES.

THEY'RE GOING TO STOP THE RIVER NEXT YEAR.

IN ALL THE WORLDS BEFORE NOW, TAKANO AND THE IRIE INSTITUTE PULLED SOME STRINGS ...

...AND GOT THE DAM PROJECT CANCELED IN ORDER TO PROTECT HER HINAMIZAWA SYNDROME RESEARCH.

SIGN: IRIE-CLINIC

...THEN THE DAM PROJECT WOULD MOVE FORWARD AS PLANNED...

IF THERE WERE NO ORGANIZATION TO STOP IT...

THEY TWEAKED THE PLAN A LOT TO ADDRESS THE VILLAGERS' COMPLAINTS.

I HEARD THERE WERE AT FIRST.

BUT IT DIDN'T BLOW UP INTO ANYTHING YOU MIGHT CALL A "WAR."

ダム建設反対

WEREN'T THERE ANY PROTESTS OR ANYTHING, SIR...?

THAT'S TERRIBLE...

SIGN: DOWN WITH THE DAM PROJECT

...AND AGREED TO EVACUATE IN EXCHANGE FOR A GENEROUS COMPENSATION.

THE SONOZAKIS AND KIMIYOSHIS NEGOTIATED WITH REPRESENTATIVES FROM THE GOVERNMENT...

THE GOVERNMENT EVEN PREPARED A NEW HINAMIZAWA FOR EVERYONE TO MOVE TO.

IN ADDITION TO COMPENSATION, THEY AGREED TO MOVE FURUDE SHRINE, THE CEMETERY, AND THE SYMBOLIC TREES.

I HEARD THE GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATIVES WERE VERY CORDIAL ABOUT IT.

THEY'RE ALSO BUILDING A NEW RESIDENTIAL AREA IN SHISHIBONE, AND THEY OFFERED TO GIVE THE VILLAGERS FIRST PICK OF THE HOMES.

THERE WERE SOME OBJECTIONS, BUT AFTER THEY'D HAD A FEW YEARS TO COOL OFF, EVEN THE OLDER VILLAGERS CAME AROUND.

HALF OF THE KIDS IN OUR CLASS...

...HAVE ALREADY MOVED OUT OF HINAMIZAWA.

IT'S KIND OF SAD TO THINK THAT WE WON'T BE ABLE TO SEE ALL OF OUR FRIENDS AFTER NEXT YEAR.

APPARENTLY, SATOKO-CHAN'S FAMILY IS GOING TO MOVE SOMEWHERE ELSE.

AND I DON'T THINK ALL OF THE KIDS WHO ARE LEFT ARE GOING TO MOVE INTO THE RESIDENTIAL AREA.

THE MURDER...

TH... THEN...

ZA (SKSH)

...SO THE DAM PROJECT IS GOING OFF WITHOUT A HITCH ...?

YOU MEAN, OYASHIRO-SAMA'S CURSE NEVER HAPPENED ...?

PIKU! (TWITCH)

GOKURI (GULP)

OYASHIRO-SAMA'S CURSE...?

WAS THERE A CURSE?

OYASHIRO-SAMA'S CURSE DOESN'T EXIST HERE...?

EVERYTHING IS HAPPENING DIFFERENTLY IN THIS WORLD...

MIIIN (BUZZ)

MIN

MIN

...YOUR FATHER...

BUT THE HEAD OF THE FURUDE FAMILY...

...WAS THAT OYASHIRO-SAMA MIGHT CURSE US FOR ABANDONING THIS PLACE.

IT'S TRUE THAT WHEN THEY SUGGESTED LEAVING, EVERYONE'S BIGGEST CONCERN ...

BUT YOU WOULD KNOW MORE ABOUT THAT THAN ME, WOULDN'T YOU?

DIDN'T YOUR FATHER TELL YOU ANY-THING?

H-HE DIDN'T TELL ME MUCH...

...WE WON'T HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT ANY CURSE.

...SAID THAT IF WE BUILD A NEW SHRINE IN OUR NEW PLACE AND ALWAYS REMEMBER TO HONOR OYASHIRO-SAMA...

ミーンミンミン…

MIIN (BUZZ)

MIN

MIN

RENA TOLD ME ABOUT TAKANO CLINIC TOO.

IT WAS JUST LIKE THAT BIG DOCTOR, YAMAMOTO, SAID.

THE VILLAGERS TREATED HIM LIKE A CELEBRITY.

HE BUILT IT FOR HINAMIZAWA RIGHT AFTER THE WAR, AND THE VILLAGE THAT HAD NEVER HAD A DOCTOR WAS SURPRISED AT HOW GOOD A CLINIC IT WAS.

IT WAS FOUNDED BY HIFUMI TAKANO.

THEY USED TO CALL IT THE TAKANO SHINRYOJO.

...BUT IF THIS WORLD'S TAKANO FOUND A SPONSOR ...

EVENTU-ALLY MIYO TAKANO TOOK OVER HIS RESEARCH.

IN OTHER INSTANCES, TAKANO DISCOVERED HINAMIZAWA SYNDROME AND LOOKED FOR A SPONSOR FOR HIS RESEARCH, BUT COULDN'T FIND ONE.

AND THAT WOULD EXPLAIN WHY MIYO TAKANO AND IRIE HAVE NEVER APPEARED IN HINAMIZAWA.

...THEN HIS RESEARCH ON HINAMIZAWA SYNDROME WOULD HAVE PROGRESSED WITHOUT INCIDENT.

...WAS YET ANOTHER HIGH ROLLER WITH THE DICE OF FATE IN THIS WORLD...

IN OTHER WORDS, HIFUMI TAKANO, WHO WAS SO UNLUCKY IN THE OTHER WORLDS...

NOW HIFUMI TAKANO.

FIRST RENA, THEN SATOKO.

IN THIS WORLD, THE PEOPLE THEMSELVES AREN'T ANY DIFFERENT...

BUT...

HA (GASP)

はっ

Ooo

THEY'RE ROLLING HIGH NUMBERS.

...THE DICE ARE COMING UP OPPOSITE FOR THEM—

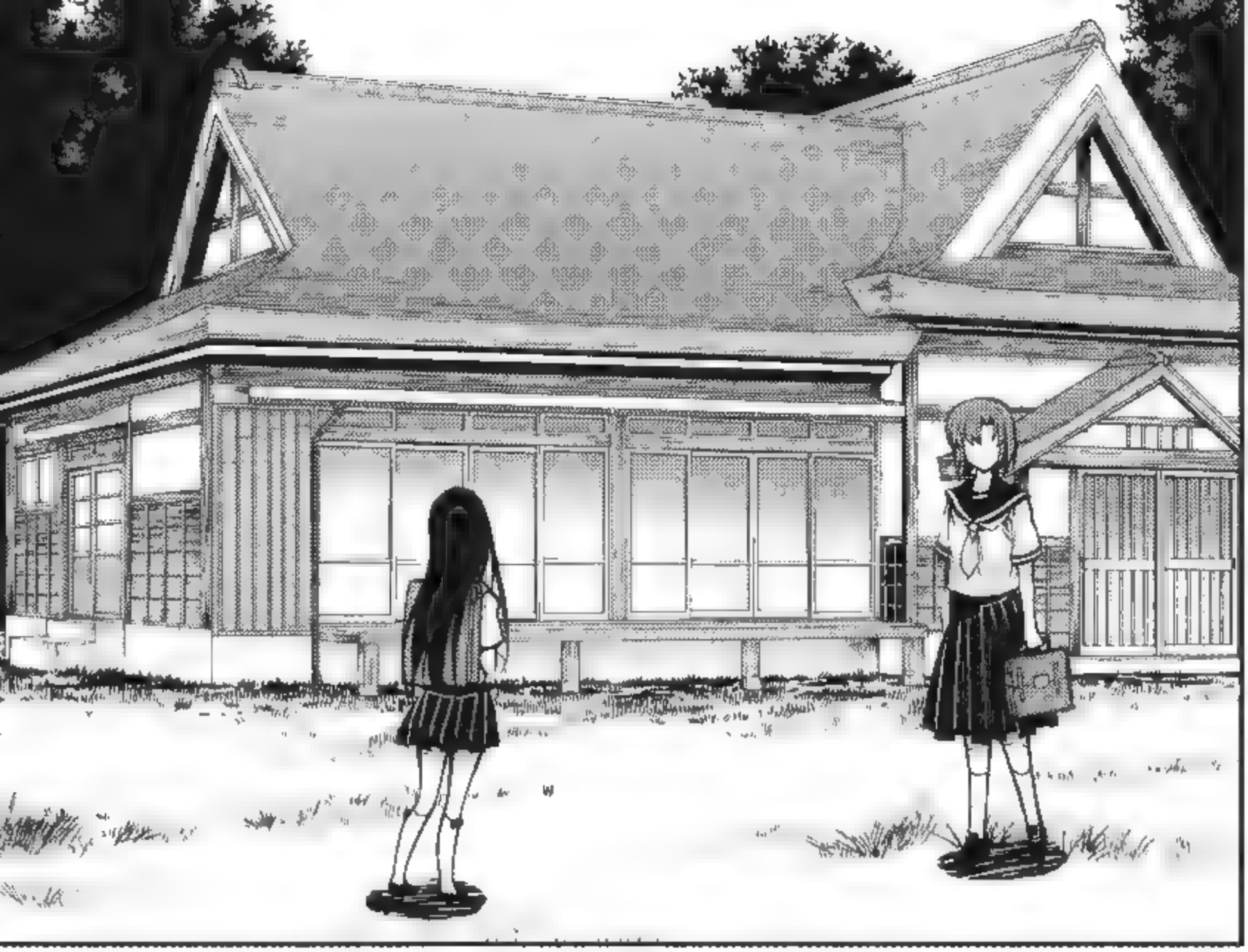
THIS WORLD IS SO UPSIDE-DOWN...

RIKA-CHAN, WE'RE AT YOUR HOUSE.

HA (GASP)
はっ

...IT'S MAKING ME UN-COMFORT-ABLE...

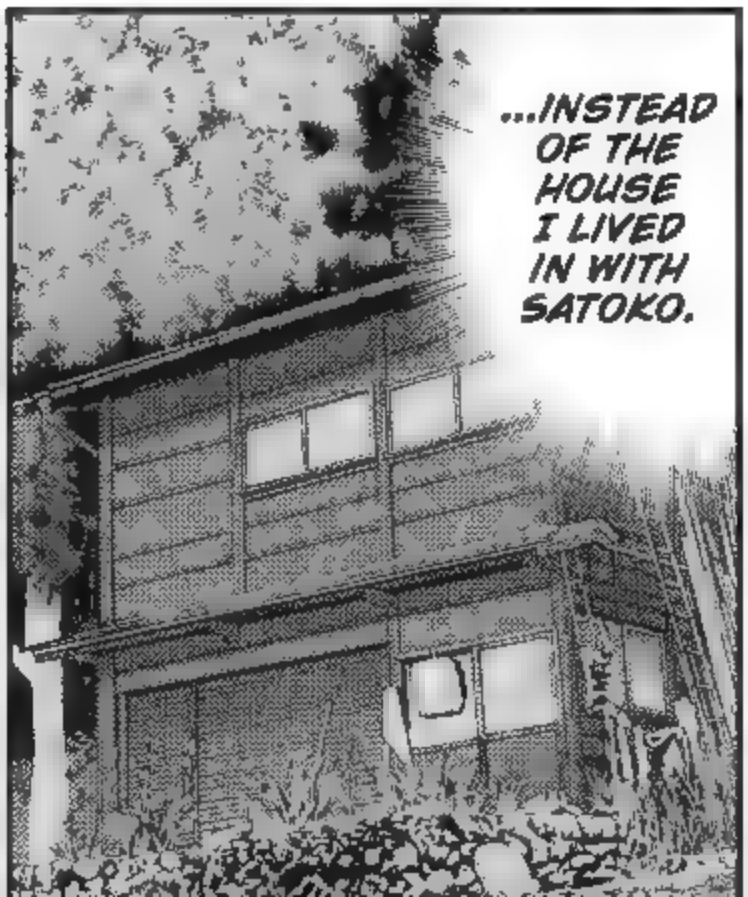
GYUUUU (SQUEEZE)
ぎゅうう



IN THIS WORLD, I GUESS I WOULD LIVE AT THE FURUDE MAIN HOUSE...
...OH, RIGHT ...

THE... FURUDE HOUSE ...

SATOKO WAS MY BEST FRIEND IN THE OTHER WORLDS.
SATOKO ...


...INSTEAD OF THE HOUSE I LIVED IN WITH SATOKO.

REN— REINA.

AREN'T SATOKO AND I FRIENDS IN THIS WORLD, SIR?

OF COURSE YOU ARE! YOU'RE CLASS-MATES, AFTER ALL, AND THAT MAKES YOU FRIENDS!

AND I DON'T THINK SHE THREW THAT BALL AT YOU BECAUSE SHE WAS TRYING TO BE MEAN!

PLEASE FORGIVE HER... OKAY?

KEIICHI IS GONE... THERE'S NO CLUB...

I GET IT...

GU (CLENCH)

.....

...APPARENTLY SATOKO AND I DON'T USUALLY GET ALONG.

RIKA FURUDE IS ALL ALONE IN THIS WORLD...

IS THAT WHY REINA TOOK PITY ON ME...

...AND WALKED ME HOME?

THIS ISN'T WHERE I BELONG.

ZA (SKFF)

I HAVE NO BUSINESS BEING IN THIS WORLD.

NGH...

I WANT TO GO BACK TO MY OLD WORLD!

DA (DASH)

ZA (SHWFF)

AND GET YOUR TEXT-BOOKS READY TO TAKE TO SCHOOL TOMOR-ROW!

WASH YOUR HANDS AND RINSE OUT YOUR MOUTH!

RIKA, YOU'RE HOME?

MY PARENTS ARE SUPPOSED TO BE OUT OF THE GAME BY 1981.

.....!

MY MOTHER IS STILL HERE IN 1983... ANOTHER FIRST.

SO IN A WORLD WITH NO IRIE INSTITUTE TO KILL HER, SHE'S STILL ALIVE.

ZAZA (SKSH)

I'M PRETTY SURE THAT TAKANO ASSASSINATED MY MOTHER BECAUSE SHE REFUSED TO COOPERATE WITH THE HINAMIZAWA SYNDROME RESEARCH.

GARA (SLIDE)

I DON'T KNOW HOW TO ACT AROUND HER...

TAN

TAN

ANOTHER DIFFERENCE FROM THE WORLD I WAS IN...

TAN (TNK)

B SHAN (SLAM)

I KNOW YOU'RE HERE...

COME OUT HERE, HANYU!

SHIN (SILENCE)

HANYU ...

...ARE YOU REALLY GONE...?

BUT NOW... I DON'T SENSE HER AT ALL...

IN A NORMAL WORLD, HANYU ALWAYS APPEARED WHEN I WAS ALONE.

BAN (WHAM)

HANYU ...

...DON'T LEAVE ME ALL ALONE ...!

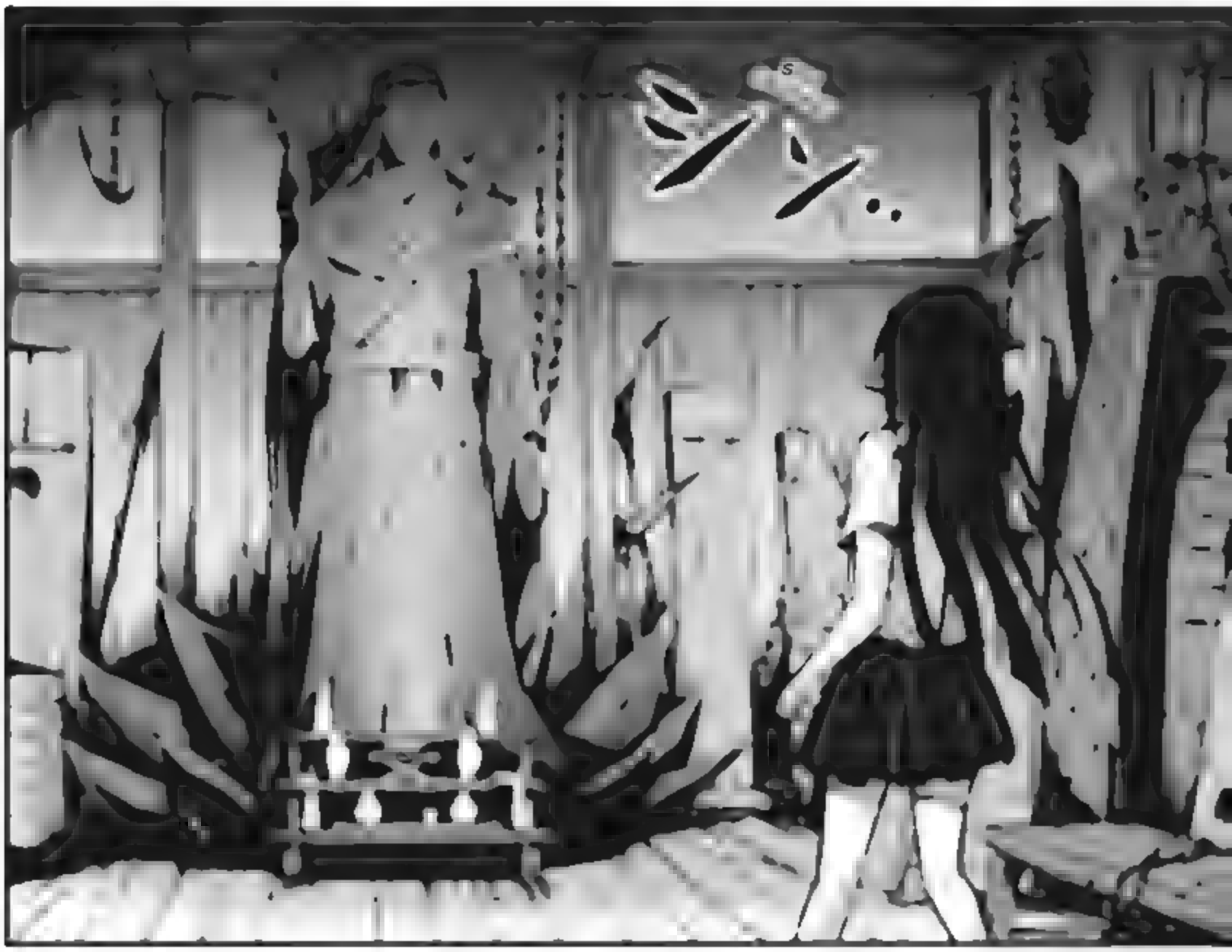
I BET THAT'S WHERE SHE IS.

WHEN HANYU WAS ALONE, SHE WOULD USUALLY GO TO THE SAIGUDEN.

...I KNOW HOW TO GET INTO THE SAIGUDEN WITHOUT ONE.

BUT BECAUSE I'VE LIVED THROUGH SO MANY WORLDS ...

IN A WORLD WHERE MY FATHER IS ALIVE, IT WON'T BE EASY TO GET THE KEY.



MARY!
COME OUT AND LET ME SEE YOU!

IF I CAN FIND YOU ANYWHERE, IT'S HERE, RIGHT...?

...RIKA... WHERE ARE YOU, SIR?
... RIKA ...

...KA...
HA... HANYU ...?

HANYU!

WHAT'S GOING ON? LET ME SEE YOU...!

ARE YOU THERE, HANYU?

RIKA... RIKA...

WHAT'S GOING ON, SIR?

HURRY AND GET ME OUT OF THIS WORLD!!

DON'T STAY IN THAT LITTLE MARBLE! COME OUT NOW!

I CAN'T GO TO THAT WORLD, SIR...!

YOUR WORLD IS REJECTING ME, SIR.

WHAT...?

I'M A LITTLE TALLER NOW, SIR.

CHAPTER 3: ALL ALONE

RENA AND SATOKO ARE BOTH LIVING IN HAPPY FAMILIES. AND NOW...

TAKANO AND HER GANG AREN'T HERE, AND HINAMIZAWA IS GOING TO BE SUBMERGED BY THE DAM.

THIS WORLD ISN'T LIKE THE HINAMIZAWA I KNOW.

...I LEARN THAT I CAN'T EVEN SEE HANYU IN THIS WORLD...?

YOUR VOICE IS VERY FAR AWAY, SIR...

RIKA... ARE YOU THERE, SIR...?

WHAT IS GOING ON IN THIS WORLD...!?

THIS HAS NEVER HAPPENED IN ALL THE HUNDRED YEARS I'VE LIVED!

I... I CAN'T, SIR...

DO SOME-THING TO GET OUT OF THAT THING!

I'M STANDING IN FRONT OF THE SAIGUDEN ALTAR!

HANYU! I'M HERE!

YOUR WORLD IS EMITTING SOME KIND OF POWER THAT PUSHES ME AWAY...!

I DON'T KNOW WHY...

NO. SIR. IT DOESN'T... BUT...

THAT DOESN'T MAKE ANY SENSE!

WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?

YOU'RE A GOD! WHAT KIND OF POWER COULD PUSH YOU OUT?

WHERE IS THE FRAGMENT? WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE?

.....

SO... I JUST HAVE TO FIND THAT FRAGMENT AND DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT, RIGHT?

...BUT A PIECE OF A FRAGMENT SEEMS TO HAVE FOUND ITS WAY INTO YOUR WORLD.

THAT FRAGMENT SHOULD BE IN THE WORLD OF THE GODS, RIKA, SIR, BUT IT'S IN YOURS.

FRAG-MENT? WHAT DO YOU MEAN?

AND... THAT'S WHAT'S MAKING IT SO YOU CAN'T COME INTO THIS WORLD?

YES, SIR. UHH, UHH, UHH...

IT'S LIKE WHEN YOU LOCK A KEY INSIDE THE ROOM THAT IT'S THE KEY TO, SIR.

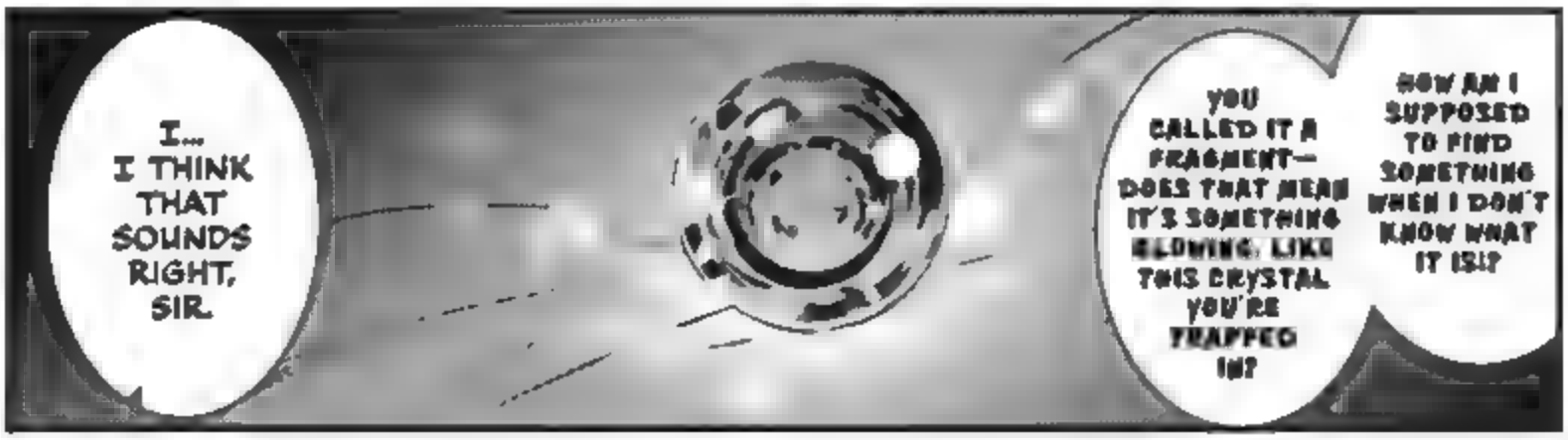
THOSE FRAGMENTS ARE THE PUZZLE PIECES, AND A PART OF ONE HAS FALLEN INTO THE HUMAN WORLD.

YOU AND I PUT THOSE FRAGMENTS TOGETHER LIKE A JIGSAW PUZZLE TO CREATE AND TRAVERSE THE WORLDS, SIR.

IN THE HIGHER PLANE, THE WORLDS YOU AND YOUR FRIENDS LIVE IN ARE CALLED FRAGMENTS, SIR.

WHAT ...!?

I...
...I DON'T KNOW, SIR...


I... I THINK THAT SOUNDS RIGHT, SIR.
YOU CALLED IT A FRAGMENT— DOES THAT MEAN IT'S SOMETHING GLOWING, LIKE THIS CRYSTAL YOU'RE TRAPPED IN?
HOW AM I SUPPOSED TO FIND SOMETHING WHEN I DON'T KNOW WHAT IT IS!?

I DON'T KNOW WHERE IT IS OR WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE!
GNH... WHAT THE HELL!?

...I CAN'T EVEN IMAGINE HOW IT WOULD CHANGE IN APPEAR-ANCE, SIR...
BUT IF SOMETHING FROM A HIGHER PLANE IS TAKEN TO THE HUMAN WORLD...

.....

RIKA... I HAD TO DO IT, SIR...

WHAT AM I SUP-POSED TO DO ...!!?

HOW DID I END UP IN THIS STUPID WORLD!!?

I SHOULDN'T HAVE BEEN ABLE TO EVER USE IT AGAIN.

YOU REMEMBER— MY POWER TO REWIND THE WORLDS HAS GROWN WEAK.

THAT DAY...

YES...

...AND YOU USED THAT "UNUSABLE" POWER TO SAVE ME?

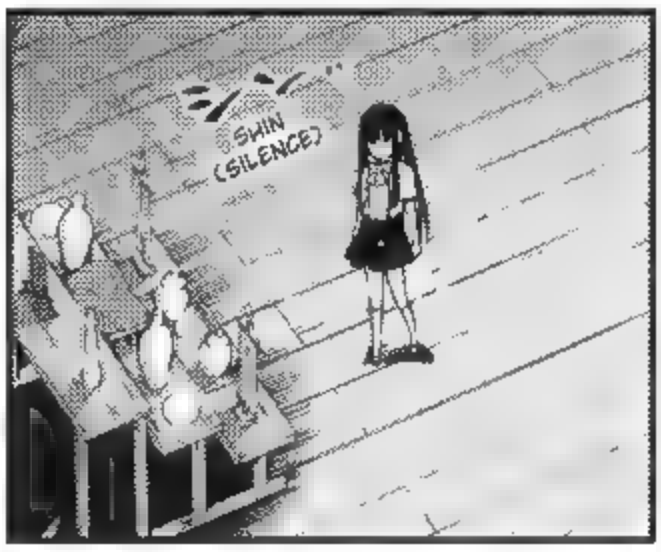
...YOU LANDED RIGHT UNDER THE TIRE.

...BY PURE, UNLUCKY CHANCE...

...WHEN THE TRUCK MADE CON-TACT...

第十九話

GUSHA CRUNCH



CHIE WAS ALWAYS SAYING...

...NOT TO PLAY IN THE STREET.

HA HA...

I BROUGHT IT ON MYSELF...

GU (GRIT)

...?

THANK YOU.

RIKA...

HANYU.

UHH...

AND IT'S NOT LIKE I HAVE ZERO CHANCE OF GETTING BACK TO THAT WORLD.

...BUT I SURVIVED THANKS TO YOU.

...PEOPLE IN JAPAN DIE EVERY DAY IN ACCIDENTS THAT COULD HAVE BEEN PREVENTED IF THEY'D BEEN PAYING ATTENTION.

RIKA...

THAT FRAGMENT IS SOMEWHERE IN THIS WORLD. I JUST HAVE TO FIND IT AND MAKE IT SO YOU CAN JOIN ME HERE, RIGHT?

AND...

GYU (SQUEEZE)

I WANT TO GO BACK TO OUR OLD WORLD WITH YOU TOO, RIKA, SIR.

YES, THAT'S RIGHT, SIR.

...IN THE OTHER WORLD... EVERYONE IS PRAYING FOR YOU.

<HA GAS>

...AND MAKE IT SO THE ACCIDENT NEVER HAPPENED.

THEY'RE ALL WILLING TO GIVE UP THEIR OWN LIVES TO TURN BACK TIME...

.....

DORO (DRIP)

I'LL DO WHATEVER IT TAKES TO GET BACK TO THAT WORLD...

I'M GOING BACK... I'M GOING BACK THERE...

I'M SURE IT WAS THEIR PRAYERS ...

...THAT HELPED ME FIND YOU, RIKA, SIR.

I DON'T CARE HOW NARROW THE PATH IS.

I'LL GO BACK...

I HAVE TO...!

PORO

PORO

...THAT NO DESTINY IS WRITTEN IN STONE.

WE'VE BOTH LEARNED ...

.....

YES, THAT'S THE SPIRIT, RIKA, SIR.

KANA (CHIRP)

KANA

KANA

THE LACK OF INFORMATION IS GONNA MAKE THIS REALLY HARD...

THEN...

...I WANT YOU TO FIND THE FRAGMENT THAT'S KEEPING ME OUT SO I CAN GET TO YOUR WORLD.

I DON'T THINK THERE'S ANYTHING DIFFERENT ON THE ALTAR, AND THAT INCLUDES THIS MARBLE.

DO YOU SEE ANYTHING THAT ISN'T IN ANY OF THE OTHER WORLDS?

YOU HAVE THE POWER TO SENSE IT, RIKA, SIR.

BUT IF IT'S SOMETHING CONNECTED TO YOU...

...I THINK IT WOULD BE KEPT HERE IN THE SAIGUDEN.

...BUT AFTER SUCH A LONG TIME, ALMOST ALL THE POWER INSIDE OF IT HAS FADED.

WE'RE FORTUNATE THAT IT HAS BECOME A MEANS, IF NOT THE ONLY MEANS, FOR MY VOICE TO REACH YOU, SIR...

WHAT YOU'RE HOLDING IS A TREASURE OF THE FURUDE SHRINE CALLED THE KAMU-NO-MIKOTONORI— THE DIVINE RESCRIPT.

...THOUGH IT IS A STRANGE CRYSTAL.

I'LL TRY NOT TO CALL YOU UNLESS I HAVE TO.

LIKE A TRANSCEIVER WHEN THE BATTERIES ARE DYING.

EVEN AS WE SPEAK, YOUR VOICE IS GETTING FARTHER AND FARTHER AWAY...

WHICH MEANS...I ONLY HAVE A LIMITED TIME TO TALK TO YOU.

...RIKA, PLEASE DO WHAT YOU CAN...

I'LL SEARCH THIS WORLD TO SEE IF I CAN FIND ANYTHING.

THIS IS A JOB THAT WILL REQUIRE A LOT OF PATIENCE...

...AND THERE'S NO GUARANTEE THAT IT'S EVEN HERE IN THE SAIGUDEN.

IF THE FRAGMENT IS THE SAME SIZE AS THIS CRYSTAL BALL, IT COULD HAVE SLIPPED IN ANYWHERE.

I'M GOING TO SEARCH THE SAIGUDEN NOW.

SHIN (SILENT)

GA (SLAM)

IF I MAKE IT BACK TO THE OTHER WORLD, I'LL FILL THE REFRIGERATOR WITH CREAM PUFFS.

...THANK YOU, HANYU.

I'VE TOLD YOU A THOUSAND TIMES TO STAY OUT OF THE SAIGUDEN!!

RIKA!! HOW DID YOU GET IN HERE!!?

EE...!

FROM NOW ON, I'LL HAVE TO MAKE SURE MY FATHER DOESN'T FIND ME IN THE SAIGUDEN.

IT STILL HURTS...

HOW LONG HAS IT BEEN SINCE I LAST GOT A SPANK-ING?

THEY'RE EVEN STOPPING ME FROM GOING BACK TO MY OLD WORLD...!

PARENTS JUST GET IN THE WAY OF EVERY-THING...

TO MY OLD WORLD!

GW CLENCH

I WILL GO BACK!

DO YOU UNDER-STAND, RIKA!?

DO YOU UNDER-STAND, RIKA!? YOU MUST NEVER GO INTO THE SAIGUDEN AGAIN!

I ALWAYS HATED THAT ABOUT HER.

MY MOTHER'S LECTURES NEVER END.

.....

A LITTLE GIRL SHOULDN'T BE SEEING THOSE THINGS!

NOW HURRY OFF TO SCHOOL! YOU DON'T WANT TO BE LATE!!

IT MIGHT TAKE YEARS TO FIND IT.

I DON'T EVEN KNOW WHAT THE FRAGMENT LOOKS LIKE...

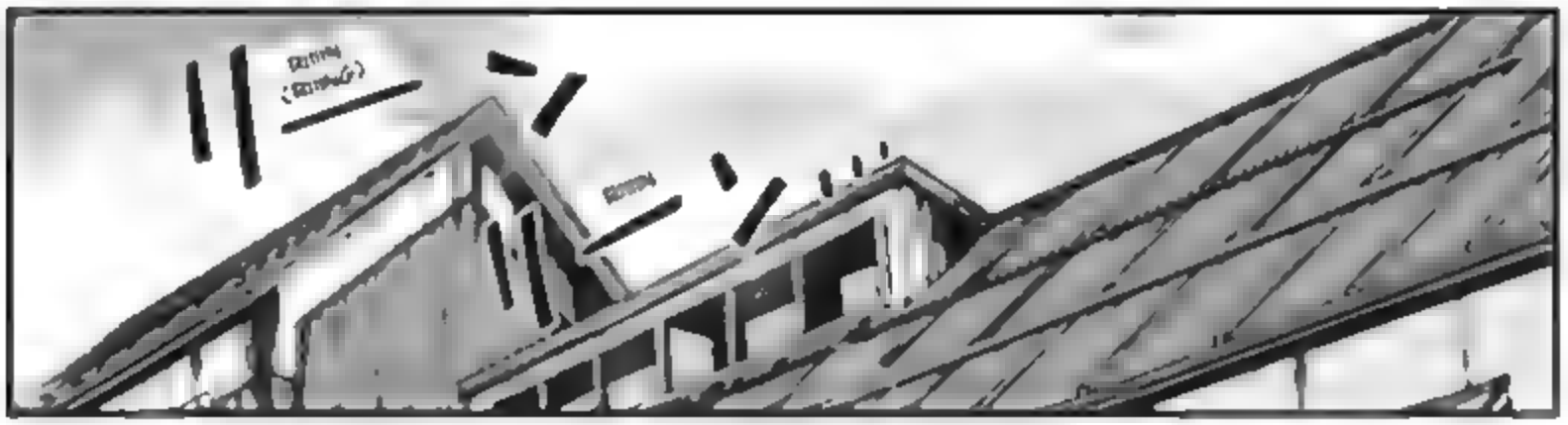
...BUT THERE'S NO GUARANTEE I'LL FIND WHAT I'M LOOKING FOR IN ONLY A COUPLE OF DAYS.

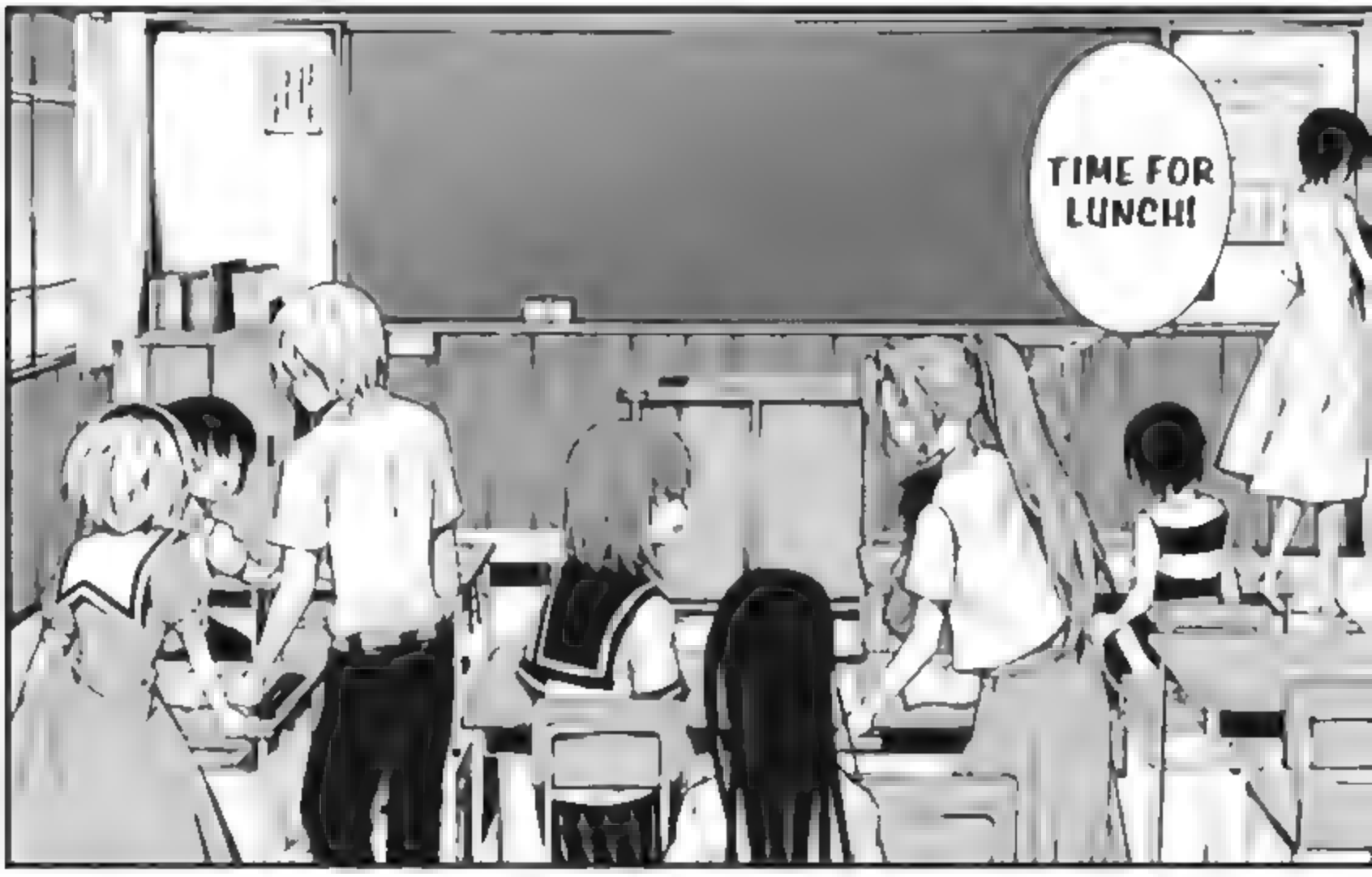
I'D RATHER SKIP SCHOOL AND SEARCH THE SAI-GUDEN IF I COULD...

IF I STAYED HOME FROM SCHOOL EVERY DAY, THERE'D BE TROUBLE FROM SENSEI AND MY PARENTS.

ESPECIALLY FROM THAT WOMAN—MY MOTHER.

I HATE IT, BUT IT'S PROBABLY BEST TO PLAY ALONG AND GO TO SCHOOL ON WEEKDAYS.




TIME FOR LUNCH!

I WONDER IF WE'LL ALL EAT TOGETHER IN THIS WORLD TOO...
IN MY OLD WORLDS, WE ALWAYS ATE LUNCH TOGETHER...
MAYBE MION OR RENA WILL ASK ME...

GOTON (CLUNK)

AH-HA-HA!

GATA

GATA (CLATTER)

.....

ZAWA

ZAWA (CHATTER)

ZAWA

ZAWA

WANNA TRADE?

THAT LOOKS SO YUMMY, MII-CHAN!

OH, THAT'S SO CUTE!

WHAT DO YOU HAVE TODAY?

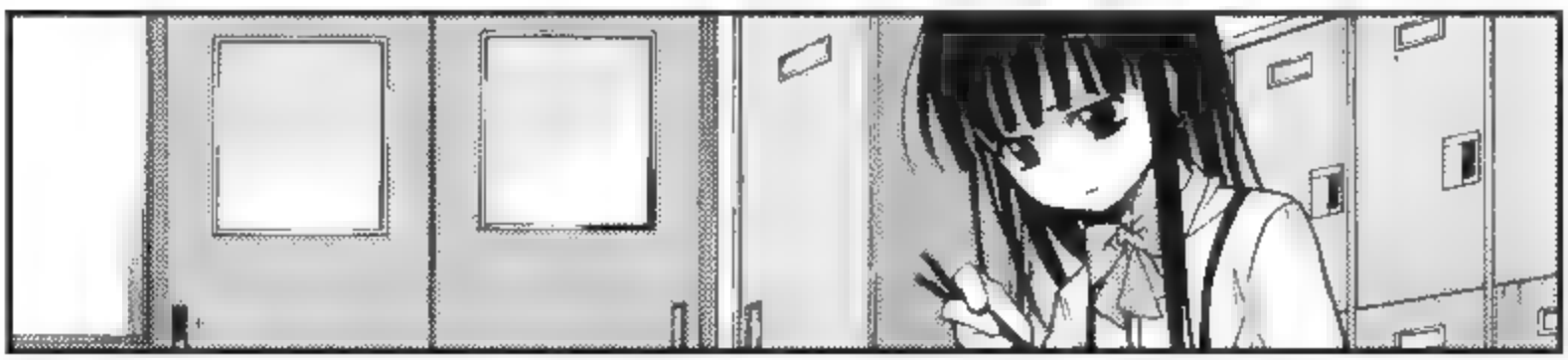
パラ…
PARA (FWSH)

NO ONE'S INTERESTED IN HAVING LUNCH WITH ME...

...I'LL WASTE MY LUNCH BREAK.

IF I DON'T EAT...

カパ…
KAPA (POP)



FOR SOME REASON MY MOTHER ALWAYS OVER-COOKS EVERY-THING.

RIGHT...

BURNED HAMBURG STEAK...

BURNED VEGETA-BLES...

?

EVEN SATOKO CAN AT LEAST CONTROL THE HEAT PROPER-LY.

I COOK BETTER THAN SHE DOES. I LEARNED FROM HANYU.

...WHAT ARE YOU STARING AT?

SHE DID NOT! SHE WAS STARING AT ME ALL LUNCH BREAK!

STOP IT, SATOKO.

SHE JUST HAP-PENED TO BE LOOKING IN YOUR DIREC-TION, THAT'S ALL!

I... I DON'T HAVE A PROBLEM, SIR...

IF YOU HAVE A PROBLEM WITH ME, WHY DON'T YOU SAY IT TO MY FACE?

GATA (CLATTER)

.....

IT'S THE CREEPI-EST THING EVER!

YOU'D BETTER!
I'M SORRY, SIR... I'LL STOP LOOKING, SIR...

I'M TRYING TO ENJOY MY CRO-QUETTES!

NO... IT'S MORE LIKE SHE'S ALWAYS HATED ME...
THIS WORLD'S SATOKO DOESN'T LIKE ME...

.....

MOGU (MUNCH)

A LONELY DESK...

A DIS-GUSTING LUNCH...

カタ
KATA
(SHAKE)
カタ...
KATA

WHY IS MY LUNCH...

...SO SAD AND LONELY?

FM SHHP

OOP...

PLEASE?

I'LL TRADE YOU THAT SPINACH ROLL FOR AN OCTOPUS WEENIE!

NYU (NYOOP)

にゅっ

.....

TA (TMP)

I'M GOING TO THE LITTLE GIRLS' ROOM, SIR.

RIKA-CHAN!!

RIKA-CHAN?

SHE'S... PITYING ME...

GATA (CLATTER)

NNNGH...

NNH, UNH...

RESTROOM

HIC!

I DON'T NEED FRIENDS IN THIS WORLD.

...FINE.

NNNGH...

UJHN...

I HAVE LOTS OF FRIENDS BACK IN THE WORLD WHERE I REALLY BELONG.

I DON'T CARE ABOUT THIS 'WORLD. I DON'T HAVE TO LET SATOKO MAKE ME SAD.

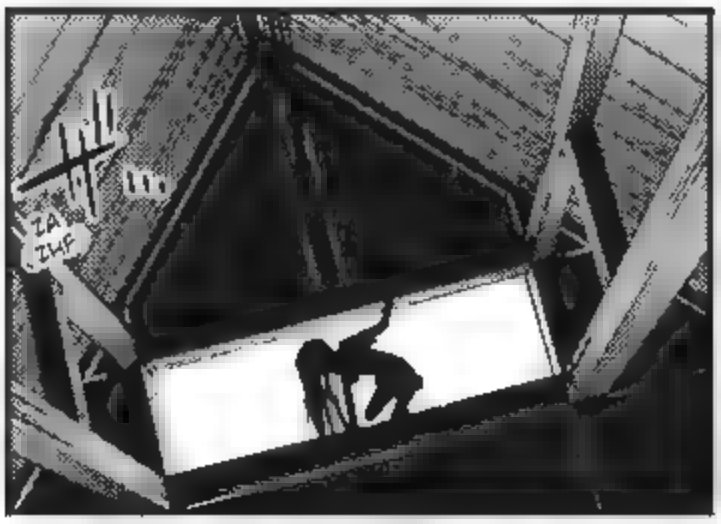
IN THAT WORLD, SATOKO IS MY BEST FRIEND OF ALL TIME.

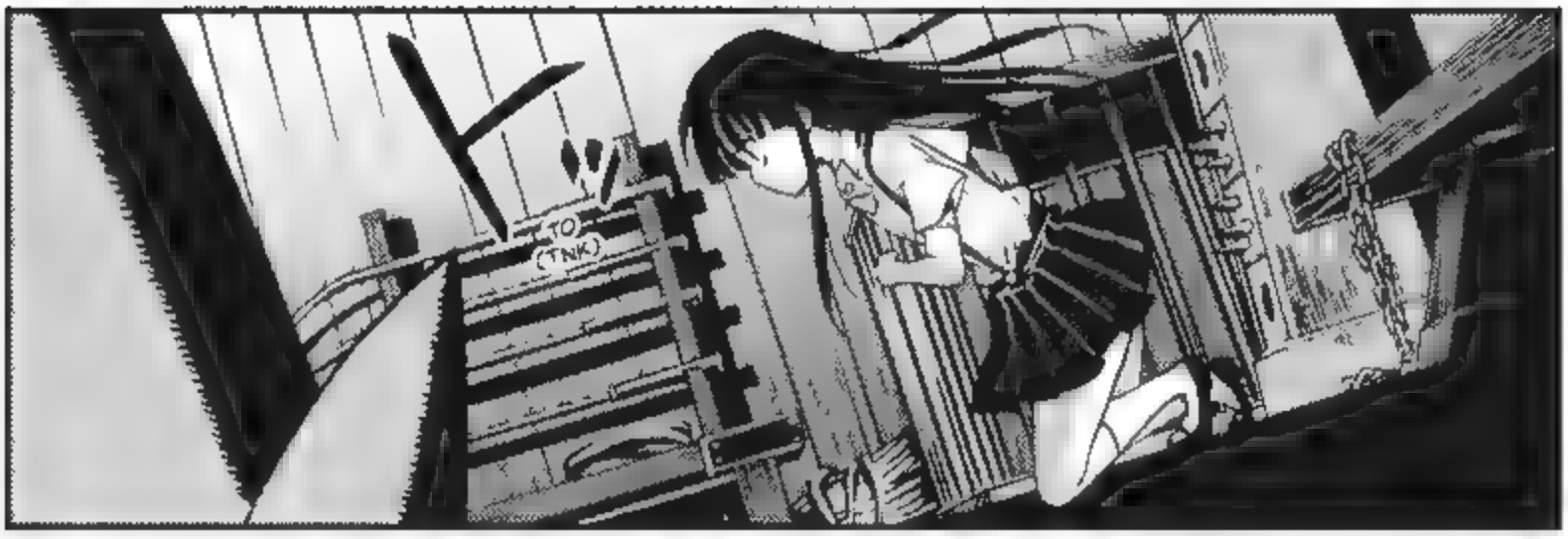
AND AT LUNCHTIME, THE OTHER CLUB MEMBERS WOULD NEVER LET ME SIT ALONE.

(GUSU (SNIFFLE)

I'M GOING BACK...

I'VE HAD ENOUGH OF THIS WORLD...


ZA
ZHP


TO
(TNK)

I NEED TO GET OUT OF HERE AS SOON AS I POSSIBLY CAN.

IT'S A LITTLE BRIGHTER THAN IT WAS YESTERDAY.

GOSO (RUMMAGE)

I HAVE TO MAKE SURE NOT TO CALL HANYU UNLESS I ABSOLUTELY HAVE TO.

BUT IT'S DEFINITELY STILL WEAK.

MAYBE THAT MEANS IT GETS ITS POWER BACK WHEN IT RESTS.

MOST LIKELY, WHATEVER IT IS I HAVE TO FIND...

...WILL FEEL THE SAME.

...I SENSE A FAINT PRESENCE. ONLY A WITCH LIKE ME COULD EVER PICK UP ON IT.

KACHA (CLICK)

SU (SSK)

I HAVE NO IDEA HOW LONG IT'S GOING TO TAKE TO SEARCH EVERY NOOK AND CRANNY OF THIS SAI-GUDEN.

BUT...

...IF I DON'T...I CAN'T GO BACK...

ONE WEEK LATER

HOW IS IT GOING RIN?

カナカナカナ…

I'VE FOUND NOTHING

UHH, UHH...

IT'S JUST SO... HARD.

I'VE BEEN SEARCH-ING FOR A WEEK...

IT'S POSSIBLE THAT I FOUND IT AND DIDN'T RECOGNIZE IT.

...BUT I HAVE NO IDEA WHAT I'M LOOK-ING FOR.

...IF I AT LEAST HAD A SENSE OF WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE...

...OR COULD BE SURE THAT IT'S IN THE SAIGUDEN...

I UNDER-STAND.

I THINK IT MUST BE A VERY DIFFICULT SEARCH, SIR.

...I'VE BEEN DOING WHAT I CAN TO FIND OUT WHAT THE FRAGMENT LOOKS LIKE, SIR.

AND? DID YOU FIND ANYTHING?

YES.

...IN YOUR WORLD, THE "FRAGMENT" WAS TRANSPOSED INTO A "FEELING," SIR.

THAT FEELING HAS LODGED INSIDE SOMETHING AND MADE THAT THING A FRAGMENT, SIR.

I UNDERSTAND THE CONCEPT, BUT...IT'S NOT REALLY A HINT.

UHH ...

AS FOR HOW TO RETURN THE FRAGMENT TO THIS WORLD, SIR.

I THINK THAT IT JUST NEEDS TO LOSE THE SHAPE IT'S TAKEN IN THAT WORLD, SIR.

LOSE ITS SHAPE? YOU MEAN I HAVE TO DESTROY IT?

YES, SIR. AND COMPLETELY.

IF IT CEASES TO EXIST IN THAT WORLD, THEN IT WILL BE SENT TO THE WORLD OF THE GODS, SIR.

...OH, I SEE.

I HAVE TO BURN IT.

BUT THERE IS ONLY ONE THAT WILL FULFILL THE REQUIRE-MENT, SIR.

DO YOU KNOW WHAT THAT MEANS, RIKA?

SINCE ANCIENT TIMES, THERE HAVE BEEN MANY METHODS USED BY MEN TO SEND THINGS TO THE GODS.

IT VANISHES FROM THE WORLD OF MEN, SIR.

YES, SIR. BY BURNING IT AND TURNING IT TO ASH, ITS SHAPE IS LOST, AND IT LOSES ITS MEANING.

.....

ACTUALLY... RIKA...

I PRAY THAT WHAT-EVER IT IS BURNS EASILY.

I SEE...

SO I HAVE TO FIND WHATEVER THE FRAG-MENT IS IN AND TURN IT TO ASH.

.....

SFX: KYU (CLENCH)

SO IT WOULDN'T HAVE TO GO INSIDE AN OBJECT.

RIGHT, BECAUSE THE FRAGMENT IS A "FEELING."

DON'T TELL ME YOU WANT ME TO BURN THAT PERSON TO ASHES.

...BUT HANYU ...

...WHAT IF IT IS A PERSON?

...IT MIGHT BE INSIDE A PERSON, SIR.

...THERE IS A CHANCE THAT THE FRAGMENT ISN'T INSIDE A "THING."

.....

A PERSON'S MEANING IS LOST AS SOON AS THE SHAPE OF HIS OR HER LIFE IS LOST.

.....

I DON'T HAVE ANY PROBLEM WITH BURNING SOMETHING.

BUT IF... IT'S NOT A SOMETHING, BUT A SOMEONE...

.....

THAT'S TRUE. A CORPSE ISN'T A PERSON.

WHICH MEANS THAT IF THE FRAGMENT IS INSIDE A PERSON ...

KANA (CHIRP)

KANA

KANA

...ALL I CAN DO IS PRAY THAT IT NOT BE THE CASE, SIR.

IN THIS WORLD... SOMEHOW, ALL MY WORST GUESSES ARE THE ONES THAT END UP BEING RIGHT.

...I DON'T LIKE THAT IDEA.

NO, SIR.

IS IT POSSIBLE THAT THAT PERSON... IS ME?

YES, MOST LIKE-LY...

IF IT IS A PERSON, DO YOU THINK IT WOULD BE SOMEONE WITH CLOSE TIES TO OYASHIRO-SAMA?

...I CAN TRY CHECK-ING THAT FIRST.

GU (SQUEEZE)

...IN THAT CASE ...

...YOU WOULDN'T BE ABLE TO TALK TO ME LIKE THIS, SIR.

IF YOU WERE THE FRAGMENT REJECTING ME, RIKA...

...THE NEXT BEST GUESSES ARE THE FURUDE SHRINE PRIEST, MY FATHER...

...OR THE BLOOD DESCENDANT OF THE FURUDE, MY MOTHER.

.....

UHH, UHH, UHH...

UHH...

THAT IS A POSSIBILITY...

YES...

!!

THAT WOULD SAVE US A LOT OF TIME.

RIKA...

SO THERE'S NO REASON TO HESITATE ABOUT COMMITTING ANY KIND OF CRIME.

COMMITTING A MURDER IN A WORLD LIKE THIS IS NO DIFFERENT THAN DOING IT IN A DELUSION OR A DAYDREAM.

THIS IS A FAKE WORLD... I MIGHT AS WELL BE IN A DREAM.

IF THE FRAGMENT IS HIDING INSIDE MY FATHER OR MOTHER...

...THEN I WON'T THINK TWICE ABOUT KILLING THEM...!

UHH!
UHH!
THEY DON'T SHOW A DAMN SIGN OF GETTING BIGGER, SIR.

CHAPTER 4: BERNKASTEL

IN MY MIND, THIS WORLD IS A FAKE.

SO THERE'S NO REASON TO HESI-TATE ABOUT COMMITTING ANY KIND OF CRIME.

...I WON'T THINK TWICE ABOUT KILLING MY FATHER OR MOTHER.

IF THAT'S WHAT IT TAKES TO GO BACK TO MY OLD WORLD...

...UHH.

ARE YOU SAYING YOU'RE WILLING TO GIVE UP ON GOING BACK?

STOP BEING SUCH A GOODY-GOODY.

...UHH, UHH... BUT RIKA...

THAT WAS TOO HARSH.

SORRY.

KANA (CHIRP)

KANA

KANA

YOU'RE IN A DIFFICULT POSITION— YOU CAN'T EVEN LOOK FOR THE KEY YOURSELF.

IT ISN'T AS PAINFUL FOR ME AS IT IS FOR YOU, RIKA, SIR.

ALL I CAN DO IS TALK WITH YOU AND COMMISERATE.

...THANKS.

GOSSIPING WITH YOU IS THE MOST FUN I HAVE IN THIS WORLD.

RIKA...

THIS IS THE ONLY TIME I FEEL LIKE I'VE WAKENED FROM THIS NIGHTMARE.

HEH...

I'LL KEEP LOOKING FOR HINTS...

HANG IN THERE, RIKA...

FIGHT, FIGHT, FIGHT...

SIR...

...

.....

ONCE MY COMMUNICATION WITH HANYU IS CUT OFF, I'LL LOSE EVERY LINK I HAVE TO MY OLD WORLD.

THE CRYSTAL'S LIGHT IS GETTING WEAKER AND WEAKER...

THEN I REALLY WILL BE ALONE IN THIS WORLD...

カナ…カナ…カナ…

KANA (CHIRP)

KANA

KANA

WINE ...?

MY FATHER MUST HAVE ORDERED IT...

TOKU

TOKU

TOKU (GLUP)

TOKU

TOKU

WHEN I WAS TRAVERSING THOSE DEAD-END WORLDS, I WOULD OFTEN TAKE THIS WINE FROM THE HOUSE AND TASTE IT.

THIS IS MY FATHER'S FAVORITE BRAND OF WINE.

KUI (SIP)

TO HELP ME FORGET THE PAIN, IF ONLY FOR A SECOND...

AND I'M ALREADY STRESSED OUT TO THE POINT OF NEEDING A DRINK.

I'VE ONLY BEEN IN THIS WORLD FOR A WEEK.

KANA (CHIRP)

KANA

KANA

十+十+十+…

THEN ONE DAY, I APPEARED— SOMEONE WHO ISN'T THIS WORLD'S RIKA—AND TOOK OVER RIKA'S BODY.

IN THIS WORLD, IT DOESN'T MATTER WHO I EXPLAIN THE SITUATION TO—NO ONE WILL UNDERSTAND.

BECAUSE UNTIL "I" CAME HERE, RIKA FURUDE WAS RIKA FURUDE—A GIRL WHO BELONGED IN THIS WORLD.

SHE'S NOT THE SAME ENTITY THAT I AM...

THIS WORLD'S RIKA FURUDE IS THIS WORLD'S RIKA FURUDE.

...I FEEL LIKE I'VE WRONGED THIS WORLD'S RIKA FURUDE.

WHEN I LOOK AT IT THAT WAY... REGARD-LESS OF WHETHER OR NOT SHE WAS HAPPY HERE...

...MAYBE I'M NOT... RIKA FURUDE...

...OH.

THE VERY ESSENCE OF WHO WE ARE IS DIFFERENT.

AND ME, AN OLD WITCH WHO HAS TRAVERSED COUNTLESS WORLDS WHO'S USURPED HER EXISTENCE...

THE YOUNG RIKA FURUDE WHO LIVED IN THIS WORLD...

I AM...NO LONGER... RIKA FURUDE.

THEN... WHO AM I?

...I AM THE WINE.

IN OTHER WORDS, I'M NOT RIKA FURU-DE.

IN OTHER WORDS, I'M NOT ALIVE— THE WINE IS MY LIFE...

...I CAN'T LIVE WITHOUT WINE ANY-MORE.

Bernkasteler
Riesling Spätlese
1969

BERN... KAS-TEL...

MAYBE THIS IS THE REAL ME...

THANK YOU FOR ALWAYS COOKING FOR ME, SIR.

MIIN (BUZZ)

MIN

MIN

MIN

MEW!
☆

RIKA...

...I SHOULD BE ABLE TO FEEL IT, NO MATTER HOW FAINT IT IS, BY TOUCHING HER.

IF A POWER LIKE HANYU'S IS INSIDE MY MOTHER...

SU (SSK)

THANK YOU FOR EVERY-THING YOU DO EVERY DAY, SIR.

WHAT... WHAT'S GOTTEN INTO YOU?

MOTH-ER'S DAY WAS WEEKS AGO.

HA (GASP)

PON (PAT)

IF I SENSE THAT POWER, THEN I WILL HAVE TO KILL MY MOTHER.

I DON'T FEEL ANY-THING...!!

THANK YOU.

SU

.....

I'M TOUCHING HER SO DELIBER-ATELY...BUT I DON'T SENSE ANY POWER AT ALL...

COME ON, RIKA! THAT TICKLES!

...ISN'T HIDING THE FRAG-MENT.

MY MOTH-ER..

HAA (SIGH)

I'VE ALREADY PATTED MY FATHER'S HEAD. IT WASN'T IN HIM EITHER.

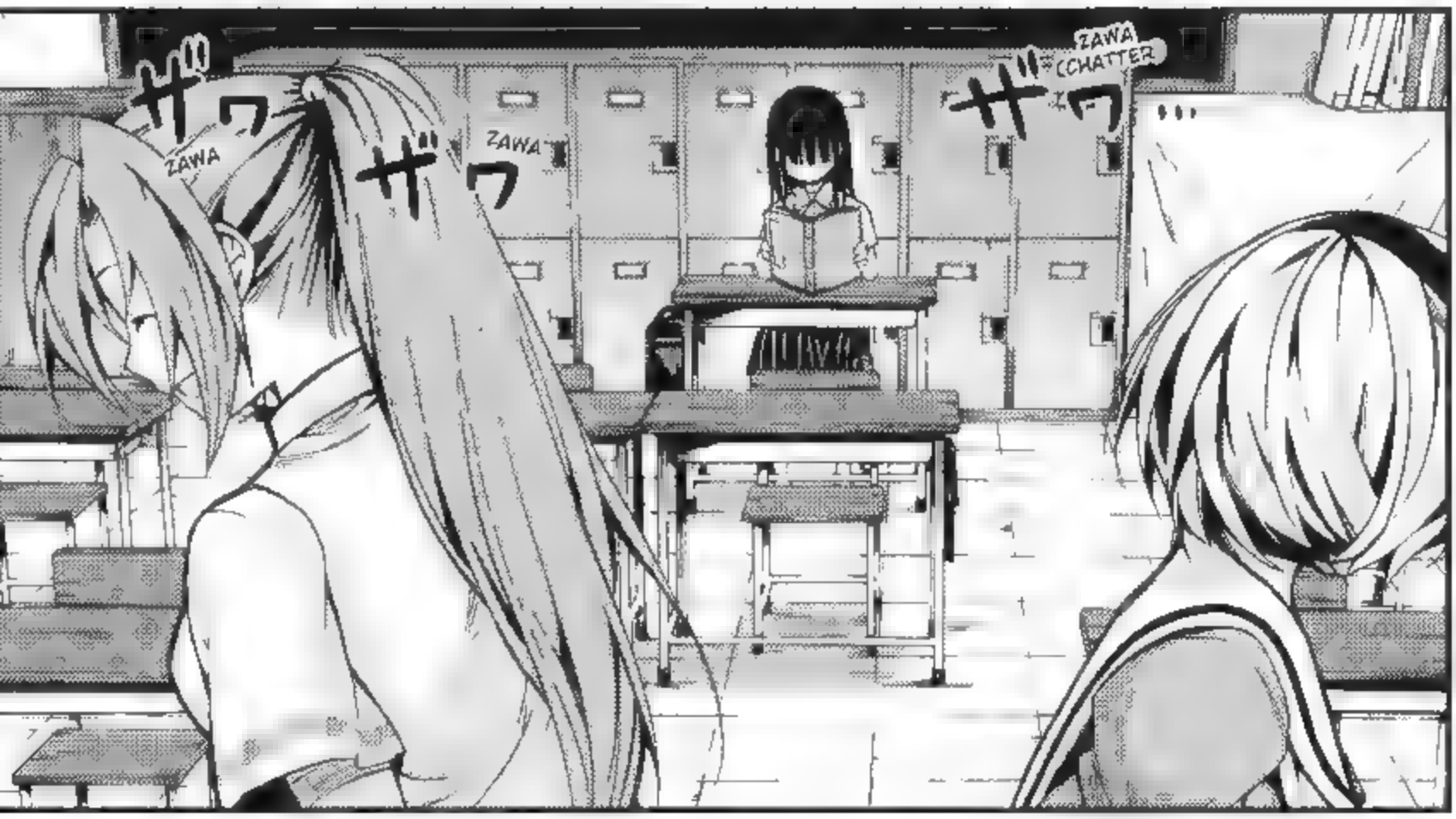
BUT NOW I'VE USED UP ALL MY CLUES TO FINDING THE FRAGMENT.

I'M GLAD I DON'T HAVE TO KILL ANYONE.

DO (DRIP)

HOW THE HELL AM I SUPPOSED TO GET BACK TO MY OLD WORLD...?

ZAAAAA (FSHHH)


ZAWA
ZAWA
ZAWA (CHATTER

SU (SHP)

...IN THE ANCIENT BOOKS I TOOK FROM THE SAIGUDEN...
I HOPE THERE'S SOMETHING THAT MIGHT HELP ME FIND THE FRAGMENT...

SATO-KO...

WHAT ARE YOU READING? WHY DO YOU LOOK SO DE-PRESSED?

SU (GHFF)

I WISH YOU'D GIVE THAT BACK, SIR.

WHAT IS THIS? IT DOESN'T MAKE ANY SENSE!

I CAN'T READ IT! IT'S ALL SCRIBBLY!

DON'T (LUNGE)

GIVE IT BACK!

GATAN (CLATTER)

I DIDN'T KNOW YOU LIKED NASTY, OLD BOOKS, FURUDE-SAN!

IN THAT CASE...

HERE, CATCH!

BASAA (FWSH)

KYAAA! CATCH!

BASA

G-GIVE IT BACK, SIR!

MION-SAN, OVER HERE!

HIRA

HIRA (WAVE)

I GOT IT!

OVER HERE, MISS PICKLE-IN-THE-MIDDLE!

EEK!?

WHAT IS THAT? IT'S FILTHY!

BASA

GNH...

WHOO-HOO!

COME ON, LET'S NOT PLAY THIS GAME ...!

KYA-HA-HA-HA-HA!

SHE HAD A SHARP TONGUE, BUT SHE UNDERSTOOD PEOPLE'S PAIN BETTER THAN ANYONE ELSE.

THE SATOKO IN THE OTHER WORLDS WAS NEVER LIKE THIS.

...I BET SHE THREW THAT BALL AT ME ON PURPOSE TOO.

THE SATOKO IN THIS WORLD OBVIOUSLY HATES ME.

HOW ON EARTH DID SHE TURN OUT LIKE THIS?

はっ HA (GASP)

SHE'S THE SAME PERSON, BUT IN A DIFFERENT ENVIRONMENT, SHE GROWS UP WITH A DIFFERENT PERSONALITY.

SHE'S LIVED HER LIFE WITHOUT KNOWING ANY PAIN.

IN THIS WORLD, SATOKO'S PARENTS AND BROTHER ARE ALL ALIVE AND WELL, AND SHE WAS NEVER BULLIED BY THE VILLAGERS.

...SO SHE DOESN'T UNDERSTAND THE PAIN OF OTHERS.

SHE DOESN'T KNOW WHAT IT MEANS TO SUFFER...

IS THAT WHAT TURNED HER INTO THIS?

THE DICE KEPT ROLLING HIGH FOR SATOKO IN THIS WORLD.

KYA-HA! HA-HA! HA!

IT'S SOMEONE ELSE- SHE ONLY LOOKS LIKE SATOKO.

THAT'S NOT MY BEST FRIEND SATOKO...

SHE'S JUST A REPULSIVE LITTLE SNOT.

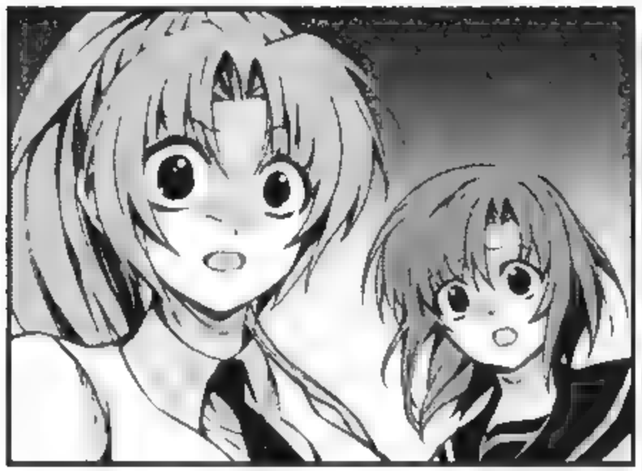
GIRI... (GRIT)

IN THAT CASE, I DON'T HAVE TO PUT UP WITH THIS.

COME ON, WHAT'S WRONG?

IT'S OVER HERE, FURU-DE-SAN!

YURARI (SWAY)



DO
(THUD)

SA
NUAN

AAAH!!

BLIN (SWOOSH)

GA (GRAB)

GYAA!!

JAN SLAM

KYA...

GAN

AH...

GAN

BUN

EEK!

EE...

GAN

GAN (STOMP)

BUT THAT SHRILL VOICE IS STARTING TO GET ON MY NERVES.

I'VE LET YOU GET AWAY WITH THAT BEHAVIOR BECAUSE YOU LOOK LIKE A GOOD FRIEND OF MINE.

FROM NOW ON, IF YOU EVER GET WITHIN ONE METER OF ME, I WILL PUNCH YOU ON THE SPOT WITHOUT WARNING.

JUST KEEP THAT IN MIND.

SATOKO.

YOU'VE BEEN QUITE THE LITTLE NUISANCE LATELY.

THAT LOOK ON SATOKO'S FACE...

IT'S THE LAST THING IN THE WORLD I EVER WANTED TO SEE.

AH...

EEE...

THIS SATOKO ISN'T THE SATOKO I KNOW.

BUT THAT'S OKAY.

...AND IT WOULDN'T HAVE ANY EFFECT ON THE SATOKO IN MY WORLD...

I COULD KILL HER RIGHT HERE AND NOW...

SHIN (SILENCE)

AND SHE DIDN'T GO "TOO FAR" WHEN SHE GRABBED MY BOOK AND TOSSED IT AROUND?

PLEASE FORGIVE SATOKO-CHAN.

YOU WENT A LITTLE TOO FAR—

...I GOT YOUR BOOK BACK.

RIKA-CHAN...

SFX: PAN (SNATCH)

WHAT'S WRONG? WHAT HAP-PENED!?

GARA (SLIDE)

THAT... THAT'S NOT WHAT I MEANT...

FURUDE-KUN, COME WITH ME TO MY OFFICE.

WAAAAAAAAH...

I'LL CALL YAMA-MOTO-SENSEI!!

LET'S GET YOU TO THE NURSE'S OFFICE!!

MIIIN
(BUZZ)
MIN
MIN
MIN
PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE
YOU HIT HER REALLY HARD, DIDN'T YOU?
AFTER THAT...
.....
SO I DIDN'T LISTEN TO A WORD HE SAID.
THE ONLY ONE ALLOWED TO LECTURE ME IS THE PRINCIPAL IN MY WORLD.
...AND GOT A LONG LECTURE ABOUT HOW THERE'S NO EXCUSE FOR VIOLENCE.
...I WAS CALLED INTO THE PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE...
THIS WORLD IS NOT MY WORLD.
I DON'T CARE WHAT HAPPENS IN IT ANYMORE.
I DIDN'T WANT TO WASTE ANY MORE OF MY TIME WITH THESE PEOPLE, SO I JUST DID WHAT SHE SAID.
THEN CHIE-SENSEI MADE US APOLOGIZE TO EACH OTHER, BUT NEITHER OF US MEANT IT.

I GUESS IT ISN'T...

MY RIGHT HAND HURTS, BUT I DON'T EVEN FEEL LIKE IT'S MY HAND.

ぎゅうっ

GYUU (SQUEEZE)

IT'S RIKA FURUDE'S HAND...

NOT MINE.

...YOU HAD SO MANY FRIENDS UNTIL A LITTLE WHILE AGO.

YOU MUST BE TOO.

EVERYONE'S SAD THAT THIS IS GOING TO BE THEIR LAST SCHOOL YEAR WITH THEIR CLASS-MATES.

.....

NOT REALLY... THAT'S NOT TRUE FOR ME.

MY... FRIENDS, SIR...?

I UNDERSTAND HOW LONELY THAT MUST BE.

IT'S JUST UNFORTUNATE THAT ALL YOUR REALLY GOOD FRIENDS WERE THE FIRST TO MOVE AWAY.

YOU AND THOSE BOYS WENT EVERYWHERE TOGETHER.

YOU KNOW. TOMITA-KUN, OKAMURA-KUN...

...AND AS LUCK WOULD HAVE IT, THEY ALL MOVED AWAY.

I SEE. SO EVEN THIS WORLD'S RIKA FURUDE HAD FRIENDS...

.....

I'M SURE THEY WERE ESPECIALLY NICE TO YOU, WHAT WITH YOU BEING THE ONLY GIRL IN THEIR GROUP.

I'M NOT REALLY INTERESTED IN MAKING FRIENDS WITH THEM.

I KNOW YOU MISS THEM, BUT YOU SHOULD TRY AND HAVE FUN WITH THE OTHER CHILDREN TOO.

BUT THEY WEREN'T YOUR ONLY FRIENDS, WERE THEY?

I JUST WANT TO GO BACK TO WHERE THEY ARE.

...WENT FAR AWAY, JUST LIKE YOU SAID.

VERY, VERY FAR AWAY.

MY REAL FRIENDS ...

...OR ABOUT THIS RIKA FURUDE.

THAT'S WHY I DON'T CARE ABOUT THIS CLASS...

WHEN DID YOU START TALKING LIKE SUCH A GROWN-UP, RIKA-CHAN?

WHAT ...?

.....

EVER SINCE YOU GOT KNOCKED OUT BY THAT BALL LAST WEEK...

...I FEEL LIKE YOU'VE STARTED TO LOOK MORE DOWN IN THE DUMPS THAN YOU EVER DID BEFORE.

I'M WORRIED ABOUT YOU.

.....

I THINK THIS YAMAMOTO PERSON IS GENUINELY CONCERNED ABOUT ME.

GYU. (CLENCH)

WELL, NOT ME... HE'S CONCERNED ABOUT RIKA FURUDE.

JUST LIKE IRIE FROM MY OLD WORLD...

HE EVEN KNOWS WHO RIKA FURUDE IS FRIENDS WITH.

HE'S NOT JUST THE VILLAGE DOCTOR— HE MUST GENUINELY CARE ABOUT ALL THE CHILDREN HERE.

HA HA HA!

WELL, IF YOU DIED, DOES THAT MAKE YOU A GHOST?

...WHEN THE BALL HIT ME...I THINK...

...RIKA FURUDE DIED.

THAT'S WHY HE DOESN'T MAKE ME UNCOMFORTABLE— HE DOESN'T MAKE ME FEEL LIKE I'M LOOKING AT AN IMPOSTOR.

THIS YAMAMOTO PERSON DOESN'T EXIST IN THE WORLDS I KNOW.

HE'S NOT TRYING TO MOCK WHAT I SAID.

...YAMA-MOTO.

MAYBE I CAN OPEN UP TO HIM A LITTLE.

...I'M NOT THE RIKA FURUDE YOU KNOW.

WHAT DO YOU MEAN?

...I'M FURUDE-RIKA...

I MEAN, FREDE-RICA...

...I...

THEN WHO ARE YOU?

FREDERICA BERN-KASTEL.

I CAME FROM A DIFFERENT WORLD—A PARALLEL WORLD.

...WHAT?

CHAPTER 5: MOTHER AND CHILD

I AM FREDERICA BERNKASTEL.

I CAME FROM A PARALLEL WORLD.

YAMAMOTO LOOKED SURPRISED, BUT I KEPT TALKING.

WHAT?

THE PROTESTS BROUGHT THE VILLAGERS CLOSER TOGETHER AS A COMMUNITY.

AFTER A FEW YEARS, THE DAM PROJECT WAS CANCELED.

IN THAT WORLD, THERE WAS A MAJOR RESISTANCE MOVEMENT KNOWN AS THE DAM WAR.

ダム建設絶対反対

BANNER: DOWN WITH THE DAM

ALL OF THE STUDENTS WERE FRIENDS WITH EACH OTHER.

...AND NEW STUDENTS TRANSFERRED IN.

AND SATOKO HAD A VERY SAD LIFE THERE...

...BUT SHE WAS MY FRIEND ...

AS CLASS REPRESENTATIVE, MION STARTED A CLUB TO HAVE FUN AFTER SCHOOL PLAYING GAMES.

...HMM. THAT'S QUITE A WILD STORY.

SO YOU'RE SAYING... THIS ISN'T YOUR WORLD...?

THERE IS.

BUT IT'S VERY HARD TO FIND.

BUT IF THAT'S TRUE, DO YOU THINK THERE'S A WAY FOR YOU TO GO BACK TO YOUR WORLD?

ZAAAAA (FSHHH)

I THINK THERE'S AN ITEM HIDING SOMEWHERE IN THIS VERSION OF HINAMI-ZAWA.

THAT FRAGMENT IS PREVENTING HANYU...THE ONE WHO HAS THE POWER TO TAKE ME BACK TO MY WORLD...

...FROM REACHING THIS PLACE.

SO I HAVE TO FIND THAT FRAGMENT AND BURN IT TO ASHES.

WHAT IF IT TURNS OUT IT'S A PERSON?

...YOU SAID THAT IF IT'S AN OBJECT, YOU WOULD HAVE TO BURN IT.

WHO IS THIS "HANYU"?

AND WHAT DOES THIS FRAGMENT LOOK LIKE?

IT MIGHT BE INSIDE A PERSON.

...HANYU IS ANOTHER NAME FOR OYASHIRO-SAMA...

AND... I DON'T KNOW WHAT THE FRAGMENT LOOKS LIKE.

...THEN I HAVE NO CHOICE BUT TO KILL HIM OR HER...

.....

IF IT IS A PERSON ...

ZAAAAA

.....

I KNEW THAT TELLING HIM WOULDN'T SOLVE ANY-THING, BUT I TOLD HIM EVERYTHING ANYWAY.

YAMAMOTO PROBABLY THINKS THERE'S SOMETHING WRONG WITH MY HEAD.

...TO YOU...

.....

MAYBE IT WAS MY NERVES...

WHOEVER IT MAY BE, I DON'T WANT ANYONE KILLED.

...THIS WORLD MAY BE A DREAM, BUT IT'S REAL TO ME.

HMM...

I AGREE. NOTHING WOULD PLEASE ME MORE THAN GETTING BACK TO MY WORLD WITHOUT HAVING TO KILL ANY-ONE.

HOW DOES THIS "HANYU" TALK TO YOU?

IS IT LIKE A DIVINE REVELA-TION?

LET'S GET BACK TO THE MAIN SUBJECT.

SU (SSK)

THIS CRYSTAL BALL ACTS LIKE A COMMUNICATION DEVICE.

DO YOU THINK I CAN TALK TO HANYU TOO?

THE FURUDE SHRINE ...

APPARENTLY IT'S A VALU-ABLE TREASURE FROM THE FURUDE SHRINE—THE KAMU-NO-SOMETHING-OR-OTHER.

THAT'S A BEAU-TIFUL MAR-BLE.

ITS POWER HASN'T RECHARGED YET, SO NO.

NOT EVEN I CAN HEAR HANYU'S VOICE.

I SEE...

THAT'S TOO BAD.

IT SHOULD RECOVER ITS POWER IN A FEW DAYS.

WE MIGHT BE ABLE TO HEAR HER IF WE WAIT OVER-NIGHT...

.....

MM...

GYU (SQUEEZE)

...TO BE HONEST ...

HE'LL WRITE ME OFF AS A CRAZY KID WHO CAN'T TELL THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN DELUSIONS AND REALITY.

THERE'S NO WAY I CAN EXPECT HIM TO BELIEVE ANY OF THAT...

I WOULD LIKE TO TRY TALKING TO THIS "HANYU."

...I'M HAVING A HARD TIME BELIEVING EVERYTHING YOU'VE SAID.

BUT WILL YOU TELL ME WHEN YOUR CRYSTAL BALL'S POWER IS CHARGED AGAIN?

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

...THEN I THINK I'D LIKE TO HELP YOU GET BACK TO YOUR WORLD.

IF YOU CAN LET ME TALK TO HANYU ...

.....

WHAT ...?

KYA-HA-HA-HA!

...THAT ONE WORD— "HELP"— REALLY TOUCHED ME.

RIIIN (RING)

RIIIN

SOON, THERE MIGHT BE SOMEONE IN THIS WORLD WHO UNDER STANDS THE REAL "ME."

RIKA-CHAN, COULD WE HAVE A MIN-UTE?

AND IF I HAVE SOMEONE TO HELP ME, THEN I CAN MAKE SOME PROGRESS DECIPHER-ING THAT BOOK...

...BECAUSE HE WANTS TO KNOW WHAT'S GOING ON IN MY HEAD, NOT BECAUSE HE REALLY BE-LIEVES ME.

OF COURSE, YAMAMOTO ONLY HEARD ME OUT...

BUT IF HANYU AND YAMAMOTO ARE ABLE TO TALK, THEN HE'LL HAVE TO BELIEVE ALL THE SUPERNATURAL PHENOMENA I TOLD HIM ABOUT.

IS THIS ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED AT LUNCH ...?

WE JUST WANTED TO TALK.
...CAN I HELP YOU, SIRS?

... FRIENDS ?

IN ALL HONESTY ...
...WE WANTED TO TALK ABOUT WHAT WE CAN DO TO ALL BE FRIENDS.
WE'RE NOT CALLING YOU OUT TO SCOLD YOU, RIKA-CHAN.

AND SO! WE THOUGHT OF A WAY WE CAN ALL PLAY TOGETHER AS FRIENDS.

AH-HA-HA-HA! WHAT DO YOU THINK IT IS?

YOU WOULD LOVE TO BE FRIENDS AND HAVE FUN WITH EVERYONE, WOULDN'T YOU, RIKA-CHAN?

I DON'T KNOW, SIR.

.....

I'M TOTALLY NOT INTERESTED IN THEM ANYMORE, BUT I HAVE A GIANT STOCKPILE OF THEM.

THERE WAS A TIME WHEN I WAS INTO COLLECTING GAMES— BOARD GAMES, CARD GAMES, ALL KINDS OF GAMES.

WELL, YOU SEE, MION HAS A TON OF GAMES.

DOESN'T IT SOUND LIKE FUN?

WE'LL ALL GET TOGETHER AFTER SCHOOL AND PLAY GAMES.

WE'LL START A GAME CLUB!

A GAME CLUB?

CLUB ACTIVI-TIES...?

EVERYONE IN CLASS CAN JOIN.

IF WE ALL PLAY TOGETH-ER...

...YOU'LL MAKE BETTER FRIENDS WITH EVERYONE IN NO TIME, RIKA-CHAN.

.....

I CAN HAVE CLUB... EVEN IN THIS WORLD?

YES, I DO.

MION, YOU DON'T HAVE TO SAY THAT...

BASICALLY, WE'RE GOING OUT OF OUR WAY TO GIVE YOU THE CHANCE TO LEAVE YOUR LOFTY PERCH AND MIX IN WITH THE REST OF THE CLASS.

I HAVE FELT A LITTLE BAD FOR YOU LATELY.

BUT I THINK IT'S YOUR OWN FAULT THAT YOU'RE ALONE ALL THE TIME.

... BEFORE EVERY-ONE STARTED MOVING AWAY...

MY... OWN FAULT, SIR?

.....

...YOU WERE A SPOILED LITTLE PRINCESS, RIKA-CHAN.

ZUK PANG

...SPOILED PRIN-CESS...

A LITTLE PRINCESS, ALWAYS BEING FAWNED OVER BY HER ENTOURAGE OF BOYS.

YOU NEVER DID ANYTHING FOR YOUR-SELF—YOU ALWAYS MADE YOUR LITTLE HAREM DO EVERYTHING FOR YOU.

YOU REMEMBER TOMITA-KUN AND OKAMURA-KUN, RIGHT?

THEY MUST HAVE BEEN ESPECIALLY SMITTEN WITH YOU, HANGING ON YOUR EVERY WORD...

...WHILE YOU SAT THERE ON YOUR PEDESTAL, PLAYING IT COOL AS A CUCUMBER.

STOP IT.

.....

THAT'S WHY WHEN ALL THE BOYS MOVED AWAY...

...A LOT OF THEM FELT LIKE YOU GOT WHAT YOU DESERVED.

YOU RUFFLED THE FEATHERS OF MORE THAN A FEW GIRLS.

WE WANT TO BE YOUR FRIENDS— YOUR REAL FRIENDS.

WE DIDN'T COME HERE TO BULLY YOU, RIKA-CHAN.

.....

A SPOILED PRIN-CESS... HUH...

...WE ALL HAVE TO MAKE AN EFFORT TO CHANGE OUR RELATION-SHIPS.

FOR THAT TO WORK...

I FEEL LIKE SHE'S TALKING ABOUT "ME" PERSONALLY...

I FEEL LIKE THEY'RE NOT ONLY TALKING ABOUT THE RIKA FURUDE FROM THIS WORLD...

I WOULD SCOFF WHEN SATOKO AND KEIICHI MESSED UP AND I PROFITED FROM THEIR FAILURES.

RENA AND THE BOYS IN CLASS DOTED ON ME.

I WAS ALWAYS THE MOST BELOVED MEMBER OF OUR CLUB.

...SHE JUST DE-SCRIBED "ME" PER-FECTLY...

I NEVER DID ANY-THING FOR MYSELF— ALL I EVER DID WAS TAKE ADVANTAGE OF OTHER PEOPLE'S GOOD FAVOR.

ANYWAY, ABOUT THIS CLUB.

I WANT TO ASK SATOKO TO JOIN US.

WHAT!?

IT'S LIKE... YOU CAN START NOW AND WORK TO CHANGE YOURSELF A LITTLE AT A TIME.

WHAT DO YOU THINK? WILL YOU JOIN OUR GAME CLUB, RIKA-CHAN?

...BUT SHE WANTS TO MAKE UP WITH YOU, RIKA-CHAN.

...SATOKO IS PRETTY STUBBORN, SO SHE'LL NEVER COME OUT AND SAY IT...

IF YOU WANT TO BE THEIR FRIEND TOO...

SU (SHFF)

EVERYONE WANTS TO BE FRIENDS, RIKA-CHAN.

WE'RE ALREADY REACHING OUT TO YOU.

NOW YOU JUST HAVE TO TAKE OUR HANDS.

.....

SO WE'RE BOUND TO REACH EACH OTHER.

...THEN BOTH SIDES WILL BE STRETCHING OUT THEIR HANDS.

I THINK KEIICHI SAID SOMETHING LIKE THAT IN ANOTHER WORLD SOME-WHERE...

RIKA-CHAN... I'M SORRY.

THE TRUTH IS, WHEN I WENT TO THE RESTROOM EARLIER...

...I HEARD A LITTLE BIT...

...OF WHAT YOU TOLD YAMAMOTO-SENSEI.

BUT...

SHE HEARD THAT? ANY-ONE FROM THIS WORLD WOULD THINK I WAS DERANGED!

...WHY WOULD THAT... RESULT IN THIS?

WHAT ...?

YOU SAID YOU WANTED TO GO BACK THERE.

IT MUST BE A REALLY FUN WORLD, WHERE EVERYONE IS GOOD FRIENDS.

THE WORLD YOU WERE TALKING ABOUT, RIKA-CHAN...

.....

I THINK ANYONE WOULD WANT TO GO BACK TO HER OWN WORLD.

... BUT ...

SO, YOU SEE, WE TALKED IT OVER.

AND WE CAME UP WITH A WAY TO HELP YOU GET BACK THERE.

I MEAN, WE CAN'T BRING BACK TOMITA-KUN AND OKAMURA-KUN FROM WHEREVER THEY MOVED TO, BUT STILL.

WHAT ...?

...YOU CAN NEVER, EVER DO THAT.

"NEVER, EVER DO THAT"...?

ONCE SOMETHING IS BROKEN, IT CAN NEVER GO BACK TO THE WAY IT WAS.

WHEN YOU BREAK A CUP, IT DOESN'T MATTER HOW SAD YOU ARE OR HOW DESPERATELY YOU PICK UP ALL THE PIECES— THEY'RE STILL JUST FRAGMENTS.

BUT YOU SEE, THERE ARE OTHER CUPS IN THE WORLD.

...BUT YOU CAN MAKE NEW FRIENDS THAT ARE JUST AS GOOD.

YOU CAN'T BRING BACK YOUR FRIENDS NOW THAT THEY'VE MOVED AWAY...

IF ALL YOU EVER DO IS STARE AT THE FRAGMENTS OF THAT BROKEN CUP, YOU'LL NEVER FIND A NEW ONE.

IT'S SAD TO LOSE THAT BROKEN CUP, BUT YOU JUST HAVE TO FIND A NEW ONE.

...I'M SURE IT WILL BE INDISTIN-GUISHABLE FROM THE WORLD YOU USED TO BE IN.

AND IF YOU DO THAT AND FORGE A NEW WORLD...

WHAT DO YOU THINK, RIKA-CHAN?

WILL YOU TRY WITH US?

IN DIFFERENT WORLDS, YOU HAVE DIFFERENT UPBRINGINGS. SOMETIMES EVEN DIFFERENT PERSONALITIES...

OH...

THEY WILL ALWAYS BE MY FRIENDS.

BUT THESE PEOPLE NEVER TRULY CHANGE.

EVEN SATOKO...

...IF ONLY "I" COULD GO BACK TO MY WORLD AND LEAVE THIS BODY BEHIND FOR HER...

I WISH I COULD GIVE THIS BODY BACK TO RIKA FURUDE.

MAYBE SHE WOULD HAVE BUILT A BEAUTIFUL FRIEND-SHIP WITH THEM.

IF THIS WORLD'S RIKA FURUDE HEARD WHAT THEY JUST SAID, SHE WOULD PROBABLY CRY.

FOR "ME" TO LEAVE THIS WORLD...

GU CLENCH

BUT...

...I CAN'T.

WHEN THAT HAPPENS, THIS FLESH WILL DIE WITH ME.

...."I" WILL HAVE TO DIE IN THIS WORLD.

ONE WAY TO GIVE THIS BODY BACK TO RIKA FURUDE.

SO I CAN'T RETURN THIS BODY TO RIKA FURUDE.

...THERE MIGHT BE ONE POSSI-BILITY...

BUT...

MAY I...

...HAVE SOME TIME TO SORT OUT MY THOUGHTS ...?

THANK YOU VERY MUCH, SIR.

I'M VERY PLEASED YOU FEEL THAT WAY, SIRS...

WHAT A LADY-LIKE THING TO SAY...

THE ONLY WAY TO GIVE RIKA FURUDE BACK HER BODY...

...IS FOR "ME" TO DIE IN ANOTHER SENSE.

I'M NOT A PARA-SITE OR ANYTHING LIKE THAT.

...I AM A PERSONAL-ITY THAT HAS AN AWARE-NESS OF OTHER WORLDS.

NO, THEY'RE ONLY MEMORIES OF BEING AWARE OF OTHER WORLDS.

IF I GIVE UP ON MY OLD WORLD AND FORGET ABOUT IT...

...AND RESOLVE TO GO ON LIVING IN THIS WORLD AS "RIKA FURUDE" INSTEAD OF AS "BERN-KASTEL"...

...THAT WOULD AMOUNT TO "MY" DEATH.

SO IN OTHER WORDS... IF I COULD FORGET ABOUT THE OTHER WORLDS...

...I WILL BE AS CLOSE TO MY OLD WORLD AS I COULD EVER GET.

...THEN, LIKE REINA SAYS...

...WE MIGHT BE ABLE TO BECOME FRIENDS AGAIN.

SATOKO WON'T BE MY BEST FRIEND... BUT DE-PENDING ON HOW OUR INTERAC-TIONS GO...

...AND SATOSHI IN PLACE OF KEIICHI.

WITH ONLY HALF OF MY CLASS-MATES...

...BUT I CAN WORK TO MAKE NEW FRIENDS IN MY NEW HOME.

HINAMIZAWA WILL BE SUBMERGED IN JUST SIX MONTHS...

"I" AM THE EXCEPTION, DEMANDING THAT DESTINY BE CHANGED FOR MY OWN COMFORT.

THE NORMAL HUMANS HAVE ACCEPTED IT AND ARE DOING THEIR BEST TO GO ON LIVING.

...BUT... THAT FATE IS THE SAME FOR EVERYONE IN THIS WORLD.

IT'S A CRUEL FATE THAT WILL ERASE HINAMIZAWA...

"I"...

...DON'T KNOW...

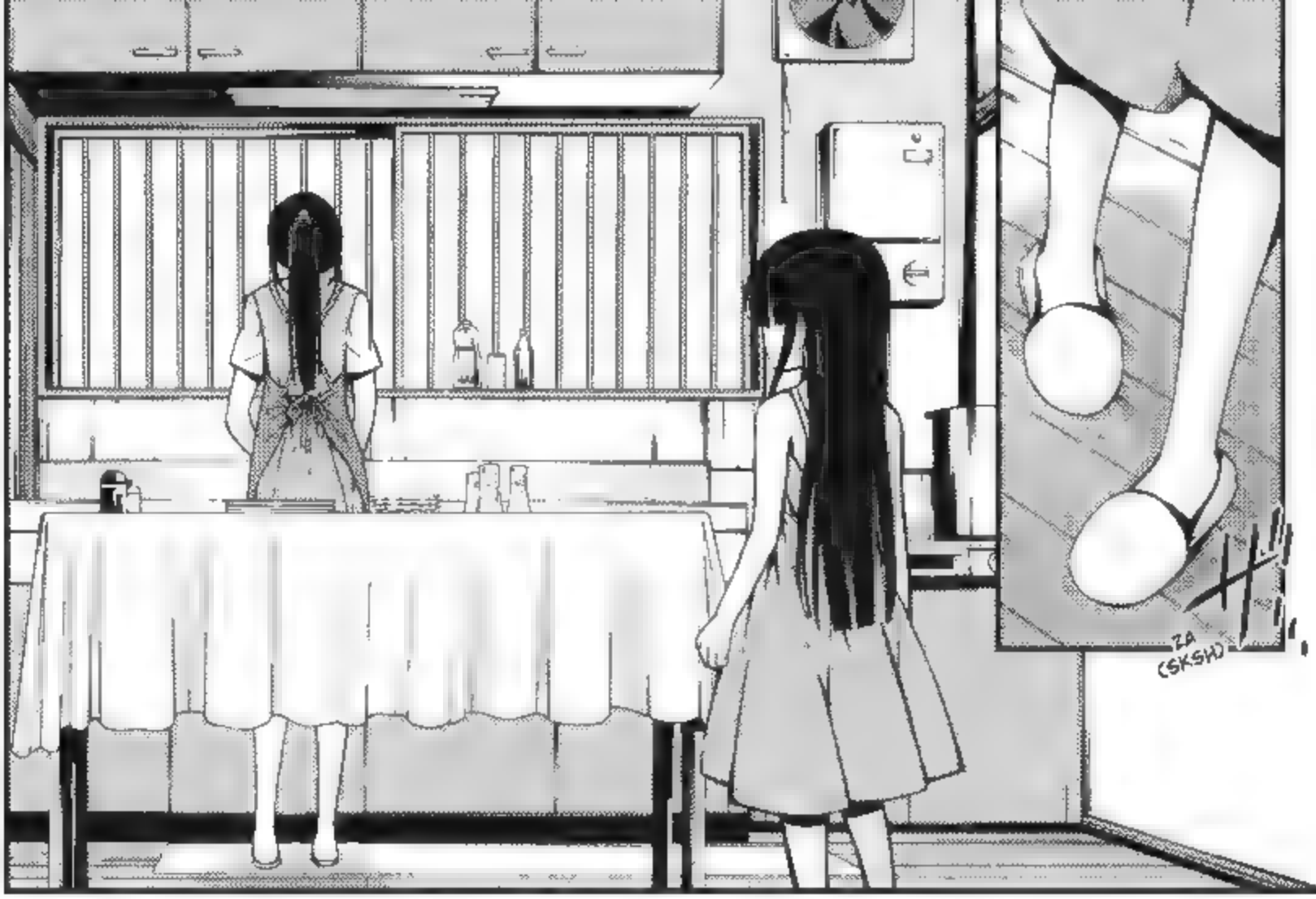
WHICH WORLD SHOULD I STRIVE FOR...?

I'M HOME...

OH, RIKA!

WELCOME BACK. COME INTO THE KITCHEN.

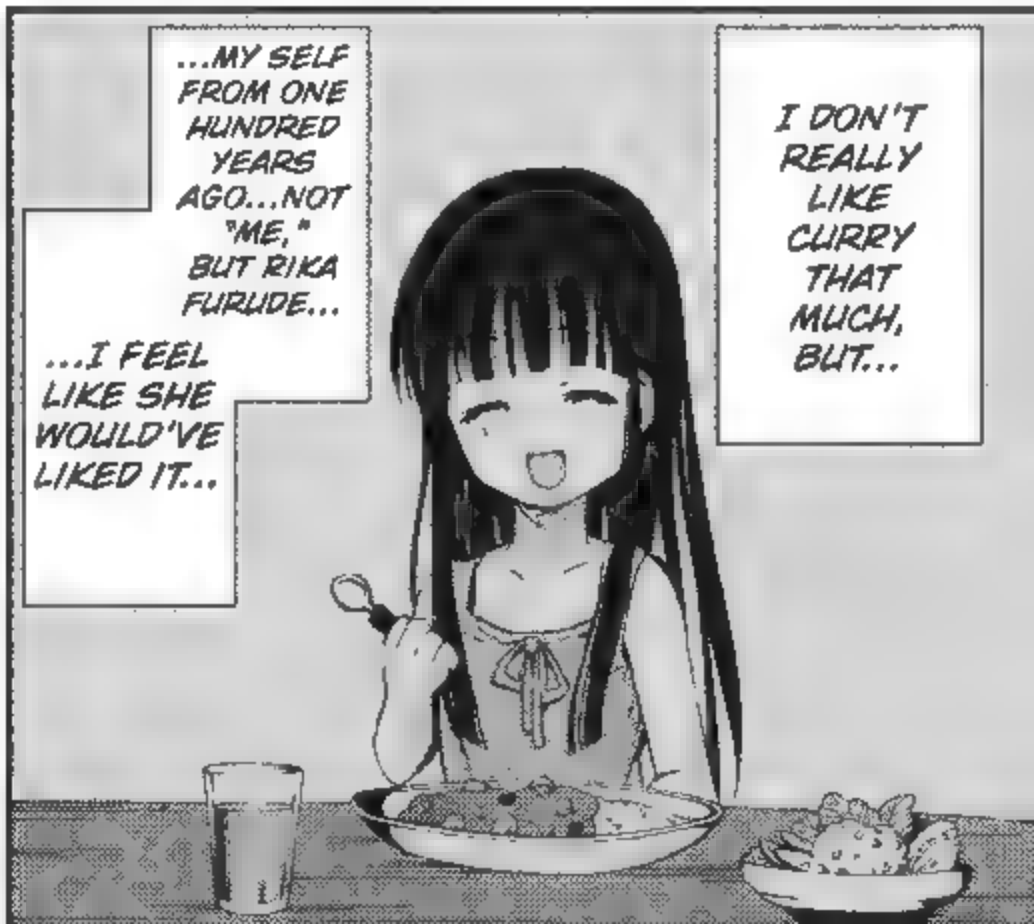
...?


ZA
(SKSH)

HUH ...?
OKAY ...

WE'LL MAKE SOME REALLY GOOD CURRY AND SURPRISE YOUR FATHER.
RIKA, WOULD YOU LIKE TO HELP ME MAKE CURRY TONIGHT?

IS THIS MY MOTHER'S ATTEMPT TO MAKE HER DAUGHTER HAPPY?


...MY SELF FROM ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO...NOT "ME," BUT RIKA FURUDE...
...I FEEL LIKE SHE WOULD'VE LIKED IT..
I DON'T REALLY LIKE CURRY THAT MUCH, BUT...

I DON'T REALLY LIKE MY MOTHER.

I HATED THAT SHE WAS SO HYSTERICAL AND ALWAYS TALKED DOWN TO ME.

きゅ。

KYU (TIE)

BUT WHEN SHE'S NICE TO ME LIKE THIS, I LOSE MY REASON TO HATE HER.

WASH THE VEG-ETABLES, OKAY?

I'VE BEEN USING A KNIFE FOR DECADES. I'M BETTER AT IT THAN SHE IS.

THE TRUTH IS, I CAN PEEL WITH A KNIFE.

...OKAY.

I THINK WE'LL PEEL THE POTATOES NEXT.

KNIVES ARE DAN-GEROUS, SO USE THE POTATO PEELER.

WHEN I KEPT DOING THOSE KINDS OF THINGS, OUR MOTHER-DAUGHTER RELATION-SHIP JUST GREW COLD.

...AND I RUBBED HER NOSE IN IT WHEN SHE WANTED TO TEACH ME HOW TO USE ONE.

...ONE TIME I SHOWED OFF IN FRONT OF HER...

IT'S FOR "RIKA FURUDE."

BUT THE SMILE ON MY MOTHER'S FACE NOW ISN'T FOR "ME."

OKAY.

WHEN DO I ADD THE ONIONS ...?

NOW WE PUT IT ALL IN THE POT, STARTING WITH THE THINGS THAT TAKE LONGEST TO BOIL.

YOU WORKED SO HARD TO CUT THEM, AFTER ALL.

GUTSU (BURBLE)

GUTSU

ONIONS WILL BREAK DOWN IF YOU COOK THEM TOO LONG, SO THEY CAN GO IN LAST.

FOR THE "RIKA FURUDE" WHOSE PLACE IN THIS WORLD I SO UNJUSTLY STOLE.

SO I SHOULD BEHAVE AS "RIKA FURUDE."

トン

TON (CHOP)

DID SHE... ALWAYS SMILE LIKE THIS?

I'M SURE IT WILL BE DELI-CIOUS.

JUUUU (SIZZLE)

WHEN I ACT LIKE "RIKA FURUDE" AND OBEDI-ENTLY LISTEN TO MY MOTH-ER...

...SHE DOESN'T GET HYS-TERICAL AT ALL.

MEW. OKAY, SIR.

WE'LL SERVE IT UP WITH RICE LATER.

I STOPPED CARING ABOUT MY PARENTS BECAUSE I FIGURED THAT AFTER 1981, THEY'D BE DEAD ANYWAY.

IN SO MANY OTHER WORLDS, MY ACTIONS DESTROYED MY RELATIONSHIP WITH MY MOTHER.

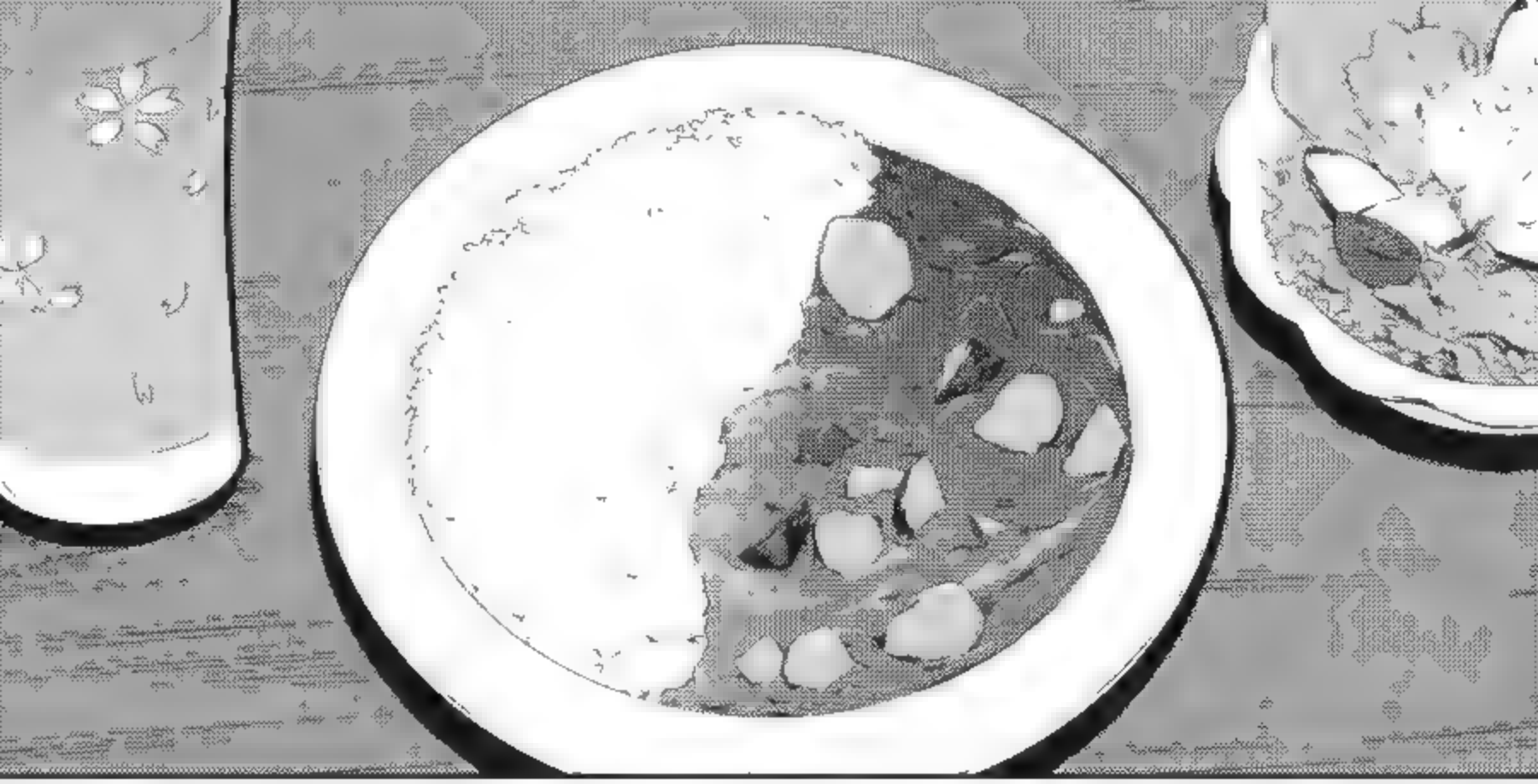
BUT I THINK...

THROUGH MY LONG TRAVELS AS A WITCH, I'VE GAINED MORE KNOWLEDGE THAN ANY CHILD EVER COULD HAVE.

...MY RELATIONSHIP WITH HER MIGHT HAVE ALWAYS BEEN THIS PEACEFUL.

IF I HAD INTERACTED WITH MY MOTHER AS A NORMAL DAUGHTER WOULD...

...I FAILED TO LEARN THE THINGS I REALLY NEEDED TO KNOW...



IT LOOKS DELICIOUS!
WOW, THIS IS AMAZ-ING!
SO WE HAVE RICE SERVED BY RIKA AND MOM'S HOMEMADE CURRY.
MEW! ☆
RIKA HELPED MAKE THE CURRY TOO. THAT WAS RUDE OF YOUR FATHER TO ASSUME, WASN'T IT?
GUESS AGAIN! RIGHT, RIKA?

GORON (ROLL)

THEN LET'S HAVE CURRY AGAIN TOMORROW, SIR.

I GUESS WE STILL NEED A LOT OF PRACTICE.

THIS POTATO IS SHAPED FUNNY, SIR.

HA! HA! HA! HA! HA! HA!

CURRY...

...SURE IS YUMMY, HUH?

?

...THAT'S STRANGE.

I THOUGHT I DIDN'T LIKE CURRY THAT MUCH...

WHAT'S THE MATTER, RIKA?

MOM?

THIS WORLD IS SO DIFFERENT FROM MY OLD WORLD.

NO HANYU.

NO SHION.

THERE'S NO KEIICHI.

AND MY PARENTS.

BUT INSTEAD, IT HAS SATOSHI.

...BUT I CAN WORK TO BECOME FRIENDS WITH HER.

SATOKO ISN'T MY BEST FRIEND...

...BUT THERE WILL BE SOON.

THERE WAS NO CLUB...

THERE'S NO "HIT" OR "MISS" WITH THESE WORLDS.

MAYBE NEITHER WORLD IS BETTER OR WORSE THAN THE OTHER.

BUT THIS WORLD IS BRIMMING WITH ANOTHER KIND OF HAPPI-NESS.

MY OLD WORLD — THE WORLD I SOUGHT FOR A HUNDRED YEARS — SPARKLED WITH HAPPI-NESS.

MAYBE "I" SHOULD RELINQUISH THIS BODY TO "RIKA FURUDE."

MAYBE I SHOULD LIVE LIFE TO THE FULLEST...

...IN THIS WORLD WITH MY PARENTS AND FRIENDS.

HEY.

キュ
KYU (SQUIIK)

KYU

キュッ

YES, DEAR.

I HAVE A MEETING TONIGHT, SO I'M GOING OUT AGAIN. I'LL BE OUT LATE, SO GO ON TO BED WITHOUT ME.

I WONDER WHAT IT IS.

IF SHE NEEDED TO TALK TO HIM, WHY COULDN'T SHE DO IT DURING DINNER?

YES, SIR.

RIKA, I NEED TO TALK WITH YOUR FATHER, SO WILL YOU STAY HERE AND FINISH?

SO...

...YAMAMOTO-SENSEI IS GETTING A SECOND OPINION FROM A BIG HOSPITAL IN THE CITY.

SO (SNEAK)

I HAVE A BAD FEELING ABOUT THIS...

APPARENTLY THERE'S A REALLY GOOD DOCTOR AT THAT HOSPITAL.

YAMAMOTO-SENSEI SAYS IT MAY BE MORE OF AN EMOTIONAL PROBLEM THAN A NEUROLOGICAL ONE...

"ANOTHER WORLD" ...

RIKA SAID THAT TO THE DOCTOR?

HAVE YOU TALKED TO RIKA?

I PLAN TO LATER...

.....!?

NOW SHE THINKS I'M DELU-SIONAL...!

THAT MAN TOLD MY MOTHER WHAT I SAID!

YAMA-MOTO...!!

I'M GOING TO TAKE RIKA TO THE HOSPITAL TOMOR-ROW.

.....

I'M GOING TO TAKE HER TO THE HOSPITAL TOMORROW.

FINAL CHAPTER: ONE WORLD

.....

...SO NOW SHE THINKS HER DAUGHTER HAS LOST HER MIND?

GU... GRIT?

I TOLD YAMAMOTO THAT I CAME FROM A DIFFERENT WORLD...

...AND HE TOLD MY MOTHER...

FINAL CHAPTER: ONE WORLD

IF ONLY WE HAD CONSIDERED HER FEELINGS...

ALL HER FRIENDS MOVED AWAY, AND NOW SHE'S ALONE.

.....

...WHEN I THINK ABOUT HOW SHE MUST FEEL, I CAN UNDER-STAND.

BUT, YOU KNOW ...

BUT RIKA ALWAYS TOLD US SHE DIDN'T WANT TO MOVE.

.....

WELL, YOU HANDLE THINGS HERE.

I WILL... TAKE CARE.

...IF NOTHING ELSE, I WANT ALL OF RIKA'S MEMORIES OF HINAMIZAWA TO BE GOOD ONES.

DON'T LET IT GET TO YOU TOO MUCH.

ANYWAY... I SHOULD GET BACK TO THE KITCHEN BEFORE MOM DOES...

SU (SHFF)

GYU (SQUEEZE)

HOW... CAN THIS BE HAPPEN-ING...?

GII (KREAK)

?

!!

WERE YOU EAVES-DROPPING ON US, RIKA...?

.....

I KNOW YOU NEVER WANTED TO LEAVE THIS VILLAGE.

I THINK THAT I WAS VERY UNKIND TO YOU...AND I WASN'T THINKING ABOUT HOW YOU MIGHT FEEL...

I'M SORRY... RIKA.

.....

THE RIKA FURUDE... WHO LOVED THIS HINAMI-ZAWA.

RIKA FURUDE IS THE ONE WHO SHOULD BE TALKING TO HER MOTHER.

NOT "ME."

THIS WORLD'S RIKA FURUDE SHOULD BE THE ONE HEARING HER MOTHER'S APOLOGY.

"I" SHOULD STEP DOWN.

"I" SHOULDN'T BE HERE NOW.

.....

RIKA...

I'M SO SORRY.

I SHOULD HAVE TRIED TO UNDER-STAND YOU BETTER, RIKA.

NNH...

UUNH...

.....

MOM...

I'M... NOT THE ONE CRYING RIGHT NOW.

RIKA FURUDE IS.

THE OTHER ME, THE ONE WHOSE LIFE I SELFISHLY TOOK FROM HER.

I CAN FEEL "ME" FADING FROM THIS BODY.

...IF "I" KEEP GOING UNTIL I DISAP-PEAR...

...THEN MAYBE THAT TOO...

...WILL BE ANOTHER PART OF RIKA FURUDE'S LIFE.

...TALKED TO ME ABOUT THE PAST.

AFTER THAT, MY MOTH-ER...

ポチャン
POCHAN (DRIP)

SHE WANTED TO HELP ME KEEP THIS VILLAGE IN MY HEART.

...SHE TOLD ME ALL ABOUT HINA-MI-ZAWA...

AS IF SHE WERE FONDLY REMEM-BERING HER OWN CHILD-HOOD...

...THE ELDERLY PEOPLE IN THE VILLAGE TOOK VERY GOOD CARE OF ME.

AND WHEN YOUR MOTHER WAS A GIRL...

!!

THEY ALL BELIEVED I WAS THE REINCARNATION OF OYASHIRO-SAMA.

GUESS WHY.

A R-REINCARNA-TION...OF OYASHIRO-SAMA...?

NOT... NOT ME?

THAT GIRL WAS ME.

I NEVER TOLD YOU ABOUT THIS, RIKA...

THERE'S AN OLD LEGEND HANDED DOWN IN THE FURUDE FAMILY.

IF THE FIRSTBORN CHILD IS A GIRL FOR EIGHT GENERATIONS, THEN THE EIGHTH GIRL IS THE REINCAR-NATION OF OYASHIRO-SAMA.

YOU WOULD BE THE NINTH FIRST-BORN GIRL.

I WAS THE EIGHTH. SO I WAS OYASHIRO-SAMA'S REINCAR-NATION.

.....

BUT... THIS IS A SECRET.

WE CAN'T TELL ANYONE ABOUT IT.

SO THE ONLY PEOPLE WHO KNOW ABOUT IT ARE YOUR LATE GRAND-MOTHER, YOU, AND ME.

IT WILL BE OUR LITTLE SECRET. OKAY?

POFU (PUFF)

ぽふっ

.....

IS THAT WHAT HAP-PENED?

SHE ISN'T THE REIN-CARNATION OF OYA-SHIRO-SAMA.

BUT THE RIKA FURUDE IN THIS WORLD ISN'T THE EIGHTH.

THAT MEMBER OF THE FURUDE FAMILY... WAS THE REINCAR-NATION OF OYASHIRO-SAMA.

HANYU COULD SHOW HER-SELF TO THE ELDEST GIRL OF THE EIGHTH GENERA-TION...

POU (GLOW)

ぽう

THAT'S WHY HANYU CAN'T SHOW HERSELF TO RIKA FURUDE IN THIS WORLD.

WHAT ...?

MOM'S HEART...

IS... THIS...?

I SENSE HANYU'S POWER.

HA (GASP)

はっ

NO ONE EXCEPT MOM.

I SENSE HANYU'S POWER. NOW THAT GRANDMA IS DEAD...

...NO ONE KNOWS THAT MOM IS THE REINCARNATION OF OYASHIRO-SAMA.

...THAT FRAG-MENT WOULD VANISH WITH HER...!!

AND IF MOM WERE TO DISAPPEAR FROM THIS WORLD...

SO...THE "FRAGMENT" IS THE KNOWLEDGE THAT OYASHIRO-SAMA'S REINCARNATION ALREADY EXISTED.

...IS INSIDE MY MOTHER.

THE FRAG-MENT...

...I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO!

HANYU... I... I...

NO... THAT'S TER- RIBLE...

.....

CAN'T YOU TALK TO THE NINTH- GENER- ATION FURUDE?

WHY CAN'T YOU SHOW YOURSELF TO ME? JUST BECAUSE I'M NOT THE EIGHTH- GENERATION IN THIS WORLD?

HNNNH ...!!

IF I WANT TO GO BACK TO MY OLD WORLD, I HAVE TO KILL MY MOTHER!

...PEOPLE LIVED UGLY LIVES, FORCING SIN ONTO EACH OTHER.

IN THE ANCIENT, ANCIENT PAST, SO LONG AGO EVEN I'VE FORGOTTEN MOST OF IT...

.....

IT HAP-PENED A LONG, LONG TIME AGO.

I DE-SPAIRED OVER THE UGLINESS OF IT ALL.

I TOOK ALL THE SINS OF THE HUMAN WORLD ONTO MYSELF...

...AND CLEANSED THE GUILT BY ASKING MY OWN DAUGHTER TO STRIKE ME DOWN.

BUT ...

...MY DAUGHTER GUIDED THE PEOPLE AND BROUGHT PEACE BACK TO THE VILLAGE.

...IN ORDER THAT I MIGHT COME BACK TO THE WORLD OF MEN...

...I DIDN'T RETURN TO THE VILLAGE.

...THERE WAS A POWER INSIDE ME THAT REJECTED THE WORLD OF MEN, AND IT WAS TOO GREAT.

IT HAD GROWN SO STRONG THAT IT KEPT ME AWAY IN SPITE OF MY OWN WILL, SIR.

...BUT NO POWER LASTS FOREVER.

MY DAUGHTER LEARNED FROM THE SUPERIOR DEITY'S ORACLE THAT THIS POWER WAS NOT INFINITE.

THE ORACLE SAID THAT WHEN THE FIRSTBORN OF THE FURUDE FAMILY WAS A GIRL FOR EIGHT GENERATIONS, I WOULD COME AGAIN.

THE MIRACLE OF EIGHT FIRST-BORN GIRLS IN A ROW WAS THE KEY TO DEFEAT-ING THE POWER INSIDE ME THAT REJECTED THE WORLD OF MEN.

THIS LEGEND WAS HANDED DOWN THROUGH THE FURUDE FAMILY FOR GENERATIONS.

BUT...IN THE WORLD YOU'RE IN, YOUR MOTHER IS THE EIGHTH.

...I WAS FINALLY ABLE TO MAKE CONTACT WITH MAN-KIND AGAIN, SIR.

AND SO, RIKA, WHEN YOU WERE THE EIGHTH FIRST-BORN GIRL...

IN THAT WORLD, I WAS SATISFIED WITH THE WON-DERFUL VILLAGE HINAMIZAWA HAD BECOME AND VANISHED INTO THE REALM ABOVE, SIR.

...IN OTHER WORDS, I ALREADY MADE CON-TACT WITH THE REALM OF MEN.

BUT IF THE FRAGMENT IS INSIDE MY MOTHER ...THAT MEANS...

THAT'S WHY I CAN'T APPEAR THERE.

THE WORLD YOU'RE IN NOW IS WHAT EXISTS AFTER I LEFT IT.

...AND THE CONTRADIC-TION THAT KEEPS YOU OUT WILL DISAPPEAR.

IF I KILL HER, IT WILL BE AS IF THAT FACT NEVER EXISTED...

...ONLY MY MOTHER KNOWS THAT SHE IS THE EIGHTH GIRL.

SO I DO HAVE TO CHOOSE.

OR GIVE UP ON THE OLD WORLD AND LIVE HERE WITH MY FATHER AND MOTHER.

KILL MY MOTHER AND GO BACK TO THE WORLD WITH KEIICHI, HANYU, AND THE OTHERS.

HEY, HANYU —

RIKA.

IT'S JUST SO...

NO...

NGH...

...WHILE PLACING RESPONSIBILITY FOR IT ON ME.

AND IF I TELL YOU TO REMAIN IN THIS WORLD, YOU WILL GO ALONG WITH THAT DECISION...

...WHICH WORLD YOU SHOULD CHOOSE.

YOU WANT ME TO TELL YOU...

THAT IS NOT HOW MOST PEOPLE LIVE.

...I KNOW IT WAS UNAVOIDABLE...

...BUT YOU'VE TRAVERSED COUNTLESS WORLDS AND HAVE NEVER HAD THE CHANCE TO INVEST IN JUST ONE.

THAT'S A COWARD'S CHOICE. THERE'S NO VALUE IN A FUTURE CHOSEN THAT WAY.

...ON YOUR OWN, WITHOUT MY HELP.

SO THIS TIME, YOU MUST MAKE THE CHOICE...

.....

...AND THE FACT THAT I HAVE ALREADY DEPARTED FROM THAT WORLD WOULD REMAIN IN PLACE.

IN OTHER WORDS... YOUR LIFE IN THAT WORLD...

BECAUSE OF THE RULES OF THAT WORLD, OUR LONG JOURNEY TOGETHER WOULD COME TO AN END.

BUT... IF I DID CHOOSE TO LIVE IN THIS WORLD...

...WHAT WOULD HAPPEN TO YOU?

SO YOU WOULD DISAP-PEAR!

I'VE ALREADY GAINED EVERY-THING I WANTED, SIR.

...I WAS HAPPY TO SPEND MY LIFE WITH YOU.

AND THROUGH ALL THE WORLDS WE VISITED TOGETHER, I LEARNED THAT HINAMIZAWA IS FILLED WITH KIND PEOPLE WHO HELP EACH OTHER.

I...

RIKA.

IF YOU DO CHOOSE A WORLD WITHOUT ME AND I DISAPPEAR...

...I WILL BE HAPPY, SIR.

TO HELP YOU MAKE YOUR DECISION...

...I WILL TELL YOU EVERYTHING I KNOW ABOUT THAT WORLD.

HANYU ...

FIRST... KEIICHI MAEBARA, WHO TAUGHT US SO MANY TIMES HOW TO BREAK THE BONDS OF DESTINY...

...WON'T TRANSFER TO YOUR CLASS IN THIS WORLD.

HE DID HAVE A TEMPORARY MENTAL BREAKDOWN DUE TO THE STRESS OF HIS ENTRANCE EXAMS...

...BUT HE DIDN'T START GOING AFTER OTHER CHILDREN WITH A TOY GUN LIKE HE DID IN THE OTHER WORLDS.

HE STAYED STRONG, WITHSTOOD THE TEMPTATION, AND CONQUERED THE WEAKNESS IN HIS HEART.

HE'S FACING HIS UPCOMING EXAMS WITH CONFIDENCE.

NOW KEIICHI CAN BE PROUD OF HIMSELF AND THE WILLPOWER HE'S DEVELOPED.

THAT'S WHY HE NEVER MOVED HERE...

...SO KEIICHI'S CRIME NEVER HAPPENED.

MION SONOZAKI AND SHION SONOZAKI DIDN'T TRADE PLACES ON THE DAY OF THE TATTOO CERE-MONY.

RENA NEVER HAD TO FEEL GUILTY ABOUT IT.

AND RENA RYUGU'S PARENTS' COMPANY NEVER FAILED. SHE DIDN'T MOVE TO IBARAKI.

HER PARENTS NEVER GOT DIVORCED.

...RENA'S CRIME NEVER HAP-PENED.

...SHION IS WORKING HARD ON HER OWN AT AN ACADEMY FAR FROM HINAMI-ZAWA.

AND TO SUPPORT HER SISTER BEHIND THE SCENES...

SHE SPENDS HER DAYS TRAINING TO RUN THE FAMILY.

SO MION NEVER FORCED HER SISTER TO TAKE OVER AS HEAD OF THE FAMILY.

...THEN MION AND SHION'S CRIMES NEVER HAPPENED.

IF THAT NEVER HAP-PENED...

IN OTHER INSTANCES, THEY EACH FELT THEY HAD WRONGED THE OTHER BECAUSE THE TATTOO WAS PUT ON THE WRONG TWIN.

FOR THAT REASON, SHE NEVER SUCCUMBED TO THAT AWFUL DISEASE.

SATOKO BUILT A RELATIONSHIP WITH HER STEPFATHER, AND THEY REPAIRED THEIR FAMILY BONDS.

...AND SATOKO HOJO DIDN'T KILL HER PARENTS.

...THIS IS AN IDEAL WORLD, ISN'T IT?

FOR SATOKO AND THE OTHERS ...

...NO, FOR EVERY-ONE...

SATOKO'S CRIME NEVER HAPPENED EITHER...

RIKA...

...YOU HAVEN'T DEFILED YOUR OWN LIFE BY TRAVERSING MULTIPLE WORLDS, SO YOUR CRIME NEVER HAP-PENED.

SO MY CRIME NEVER HAPPENED EITHER.

YES...THAT WORLD IS AN "IDEAL WORLD" BORN FROM SOMEONE ELSE'S DREAM, SIR.

I'VE ALREADY VANISHED, SO I WON'T BE TAKING RIKA ON A JOURNEY LINKING FRAG-MENTS.

YOU CAN CHOOSE THAT WORLD, RIKA.

EVEN TAKANO'S CRIME NEVER HAPPENED. IT'S A SPOTLESS WORLD... EVERYONE IS FREE FROM SIN.

.....

...BY COMMITTING THE WORST CRIME OF ALL: MATRICIDE.

AND GOD ALSO GAVE YOU THE OPTION OF RETURNING TO YOUR OLD WORLD...

THAT IS YOUR PATH TO FREEDOM FROM THAT SINLESS PARADISE.

IF I WERE YOUR MOTHER, RIKA, I WOULD PROBABLY SAY...

HOW WOULD YOU FEEL IF I KILLED MY MOTHER TO REACH MY OWN HAPPINESS?

...HANYU.

YOU SAID YOUR DAUGHTER STRUCK YOU DOWN.

...I WOULD GLADLY GIVE MY LIFE FOR MY DAUGHTER'S HAPPINESS.

THEREFORE, MY DAUGHTER...

.....

THERE'S NO NEED FOR YOU TO CONSIDER ME OR YOUR MOTHER WHEN MAKING YOUR CHOICE.

IN FACT, YOU MUSTN'T MAKE EITHER OF US THE REASON.

...BEING LEFT ALONE AT A CROSSROADS IS WHAT LIFE IS REALLY ABOUT.

WITH NO GUIDANCE AND NO HINTS...

STRUGGLE, CHOOSE...

...AND GO FORWARD.

A TRUE CHOICE IS MADE WHEN YOU'VE STRUGGLED WITH ALL YOUR HEART AND HAVE NO IDEA WHICH PATH TO CHOOSE.

MANKIND HESITATES AT EVERY DECISION, EVERY CROSSROAD OF LIFE.

CHOOSING THE ROAD THAT'S BRIGHTLY LIT, FOLLOWING A PATH THAT'S ALREADY BEEN CHOSEN FOR YOU— THAT IS NO FIGHT.

FIGHTING DOESN'T MEAN TEARING DOWN AND OVERCOMING THE OBSTACLES BEFORE YOU.

THOSE ARE MERELY DIVERSIONS AS YOU PURSUE ONE PATH.

...IS TO CHOOSE FOR YOURSELF.

WHAT FIGHTING REALLY MEANS...

...YOU MUST FIGHT.

...TO... FIGHT.

THAT IS WHAT IT MEANS TO FIGHT.

...THE FRAGMENT INSIDE YOUR MOTHER WILL LOSE ITS POWER FOREVER.

WHEN THE SUN SETS TOMORROW EVENING...

ONE LAST THING.

EXACTLY.

IN OTHER WORDS. I ONLY HAVE UNTIL SUNSET TOMOR-ROW...

IT MEANS THAT YOU WILL FOREVER LOSE YOUR CHANCE TO TAKE IT BACK.

BUT THAT DOESN'T MEAN THAT IT WILL DISAPPEAR.

BUT PLEASE DON'T RUN FROM THIS CHOICE.

BECAUSE WHICHEVER WORLD YOU CHOOSE...

...THAT WORLD IS SURE TO BE A WONDER-FUL ONE.

...FIGHT, RIKA.

YOUR FIGHT WILL CONTINUE UNTIL SUNSET TOMOR-ROW.

.....

I UNDER-STAND, HANYU.

I...WILL FIGHT...

...WITH THIS DECISION.

FOR EVERY-THING...

...THANK YOU.

IF I SEE YOU AGAIN, IT WILL BE IN THE OTHER WORLD.

I'LL CHOOSE THIS WORLD, THEN...

MORNING DAWNS ON HINAMI-ZAWA.

I TELL MY MOTHER I'M OFF TO SCHOOL.

I GO TO SCHOOL AND TALK TO MY CLASS-MATES.

...BUT I HOPE WE CAN COME TO BE GOOD FRIENDS.

IT'S STILL AWK-WARD...

AFTER SCHOOL, WE ALL PLAY OUR FIRST GAME.

...BUT WE STILL HAVE A GOOD TIME PLAYING.

NONE OF US REALLY KNOW THE RULES YET...

...MY FATHER AND MOTHER ARE THERE.

WEL-COME HOME, RIKA.

WHEN I GO HOME...

AHH...

TODAY WAS SUCH A WON-DERFUL DAY.

IT REALLY IS A BEAUTIFUL WORLD...

Bread fell down from heaven.
Some lamented loudly that the bread was not meat.

Meat fell down from heaven.
Some lamented loudly that they preferred the bread.

God came down from heaven.
He will make water fall down for a time
until everyone knows what will make them happy.

Rain fell down from heaven.
Everyone lamented loudly that their clothing became wet.

Flames fell down from heaven.
Everyone lamented loudly that their houses had been burned.

God came down from heaven.
He will make nothing fall from heaven
until everyone knows what will make them happy.

Long, long ago
in the days when gods appeared to men...

Rain fell down from heaven.
Passing travelers expressed their gratitude.

"God, we thank thee for the unexpected weather.
Now we can carry on our long journey and
enjoy the break from the monotony."

God saw them off without a word.

Nothing fell down from heaven.
Some lamented loudly that God had forsaken them.

All manner of things fell down from heaven.
Some lamented loudly that God should be more
selective in what He sent.

Boulders rained down from heaven.
Now the lamentations finally ceased.

As it should be. Gods and dice are best when silent.

Frederica Bernkastel

はっ

HA (GASP)

はぁ

HA...

WHERE AM I...?

RIKA... SAN.

MEW ...

IS THIS... THE CLINIC ...?

THANK GOOD-NESS!! WHAT A RELIEF !!

YOU'RE AWAKE!

YES!

YOU WERE ON YOUR WAY BACK TO [redacted] WITH YOUR FRIENDS WHEN YOU GOT IN AN ACCIDENT AND HIT YOUR HEAD.

YOU'VE BEEN UNCON-SCIOUS FOR A WHOLE MONTH.

SATOSHI... KEIICHI...

THEN I REALLY AM...

...I'M SO GLAD...

...WE WERE ALL AFRAID YOU WOULD NEVER WAKE UP.

YOUR FRIENDS WERE ALL SO WORRIED ABOUT YOU.

SATOKO-CHAN, MAEBARA-SAN, MION-SAN, RENA-SAN— EVERY-ONE!

...UNFOR-TUNATELY, SATOSHI-KUN ISN'T READY TO WAKE UP YET.

IRIE...

...WHAT ABOUT...MY MOTHER...?

...IS SHE DEAD, SIR?

YES, ON THE NIGHT OF THE COTTON DRIFTING TWO YEARS AGO.

...DID YOU DREAM ABOUT YOUR MOTHER WHILE YOU WERE ASLEEP?

.....

...I SEE YOUR MEMORIES ARE STILL A LITTLE MIXED UP.

...I'LL BE RIGHT BACK. YOU REST.

TA (TMP)

.....

THANK YOU. THAT'S ENOUGH, SIR.

MIIN (BUZZ)

MIIN

MIIN

MIN

...AND I WAS JUST HAVING A VERY LONG DREAM...?

OR IS IT AS IRIE SAID...

...DOES THAT MEAN...I CHOSE TO COME BACK HERE?

IF THIS IS MY OLD WORLD...

HANYU ...

...ARE YOU THERE ?

OH GOOD, YOU'RE HERE.

WAS THAT WORLD A DREAM?

...OR WAS IT REAL...?

SUU (FWSH)

...UHH.

.....

...NO...

IT WAS REAL...

SJ (SSK)

WHEN I DIE AND GO TO ANOTHER WORLD, I DON'T KEEP THE MEMORIES FROM RIGHT BEFORE I DIED.

THAT'S WHY... I CAN'T REMEM-BER.

IT WAS A DREAM, SIR.

...I DON'T UNDER-STAND WHAT YOU'RE SAYING, RIKA, SIR.

DID SOME-THING HAPPEN, SIR?

...ARE YOU SERIOUS?

...WAS IT A DREAM?

THEN WHAT WAS THAT WORLD I WAS LIVING IN UNTIL JUST NOW?

...I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT, RIKA, SIR.

...MY MOM...

...I... WITH MY OWN HANDS, I...

SO...

RIKA. YOU WERE DREAM-ING, SIR.

RIKA.

PON (PAT)

バンッ

BAN (SLAM)

DOTA

ドダドタ

DOTA

DOTA (STOMP)

ドタッ

...Ri...

TA (LEAP)

GABA (FWUMP)

RIKA!!

RIKAAA!!

WEL-COME BACK, RIKA-CHAN.

SATO-KO...

WAAAH...

WE KNEW ALL ALONG YOU WOULD COME BACK TO US.

WE ALL CAME TO VISIT YOU EVERY DAY.

KNOW WHAT ?

YEAH, BECAUSE WHEN WE ALL BELIEVE IN ONE THING, THEN MIRACLES HAPPEN!

ALL MONTH...

.....

GYU (CLENCH)

I'M SO, SO GLAD...

I'M SO GLAD.

IT WAS A VERY STRANGE WORLD.

...BUT SO MANY THINGS WERE DIFFERENT...

IT WAS JUST LIKE HINAMI-ZAWA...

...I THINK I WAS DREAMING, SIRS.

MIIIN (BUZZ)

MIN

MIN

MIN

...I BET YOU WOULDN'T HAVE BEEN ABLE TO COME BACK EVER AGAIN.

IT MUST HAVE BEEN ONE OF THOSE NEAR-DEATH EXPERI-ENCES! IF YOU'D CHOSEN THE OTHER WORLD...

...YOU WERE PROBABLY CHOOSING BETWEEN THIS SIDE AND THE OTHER SIDE OF THE SANZU RIVER.

...AND CHOSE THIS WORLD, SIRS.

I THINK IT MEANS THAT I WEIGHED THAT WORLD AND THIS ONE ON A SCALE...

AND THE FACT THAT I'M HERE...

AND YOU BELIEVED YOU'D COME BACK TOO, SO WE REACHED OUT TO EACH OTHER, AND YOU TOOK OUR HANDS.

.....

WE ALL BELIEVED YOU WOULD COME BACK, RIKA-CHAN.

...BECAUSE I FELT MORE AT HOME IN THIS WORLD.

I COMPARED THIS WORLD AND THAT ONE, AND I CHOSE TO GO FORWARD IN THIS ONE.

...I DIDN'T COME BACK.

THIS WORLD TREATS ME KINDLY.

SATOKO IS ALWAYS WITH ME, AND THE CLUB MEMBERS ARE ALL HERE.

...IT'S A WORLD BUILT ON EVERYONE'S SINS AND MISERY.

BUT WHEN IT COMES RIGHT DOWN TO IT...

...THAT SOUNDS LIKE A VERY INTER-ESTING WORLD.

IT WAS A COMPLETELY AND UTTERLY SELF-CENTERED DECISION.

IN OTHER WORDS, I CHOSE TO FORCE EVERY-ONE TO SACRI-FICE THEIR COMFORT FOR MY HAPPI-NESS.

MAYBE IT WAS JUST A DREAM, BUT YOU MADE US HAPPY.

THANK YOU.

MEW...

YOU KNOW EVERYTHING, RENA.

BUT YOU'RE STILL NOT SURE IF YOU MADE THE RIGHT DECISION, RIKA-CHAN.

WH-WHY DO YOU SAY THAT, SIR?

I MEAN, IT'S TRUE MY PARENTS' DIVORCE MADE ME VERY SAD...

...AND A LOT OF THINGS CHANGED BECAUSE OF IT.

IF YOU WERE TO ASK ME...

...I'D SAY YOU MADE THE RIGHT CHOICE WITH THIS WORLD.

BUT I ALSO LEARNED A LOT BECAUSE OF IT.

SO I THINK THE REINA IN THAT WORLD STILL HAD A LOT OF GROWING TO DO.

IT'S TRUE— TRIALS AND SETBACKS IN LIFE TEND TO HELP PEOPLE GROW.

YEAH...

...I REGRET WHAT I DID BACK THEN MORE THAN ANYTHING. I'LL NEVER FORGET IT MY WHOLE LIFE.

I'M GOING TO HAVE TO KEEP REPENTING FOR IT UNTIL THE DAY I DIE.

...BUT LIKE RENA SAYS, THAT INCIDENT...

...TAUGHT ME A LOT OF IMPORTANT THINGS.

THAT GOES FOR ME TOO.

BEFORE, I USED TO CRY TO NII-NII FOR EVERY-THING...

SO TO US, I THINK THIS WORLD IS MORE PRECIOUS.

.....

STILL... STILL, IF YOU COULD CHOOSE BETWEEN THE TWO WORLDS...

... WOULDN'T IT BE BETTER TO LIVE IN ONE WITHOUT SIN?

I GET IT...

...?

HEY, MII-CHAN, DID YOU BRING ANY HARD CANDIES TODAY?

HUH? YEAH...

HERE.

SU (SHP)

OHH? NO PENALTY GAMES. DON'T WORRY— JUST CHOOSE.

...MEW, THERE'S NOT GOING TO BE A PENALTY GAME IF I CHOOSE WRONG, SIR?

WHICH HAND WOULD YOU PREFER? WHICH?

OKAY, RIKA-CHAN, I HAVE A PRESENT FOR YOU!

THIS ONE?

KYU (SQUEEZE)

HERE.

...I CHOOSE THIS ONE, SIR.

ALL RIGHT...

DO YOU LIKE IT?

IT'S DELICIOUS, SIR. MEW.

KORO

KORO (ROLL)

AHHH, SIR!

AH-HA-HA! CON-GRATS!

SAY AHHH! ♡

HOW DO YOU KNOW YOU WON, RIKA-CHAN?

I THINK I'M HAPPY BECAUSE I BEAT THE ODDS OF THE CHOICE, SIR.

THE SWEET WINE OF VICTORY IS ALWAYS DELICIOUS, SIR.

YOU'RE HAPPY? THEN YOUR WORLD MUST BE HAPPY.

SU (SSK)

PA (OPEN)

.....

THERE ARE TWO CANDIES IN THAT HAND...

I CHOSE THE WRONG HAND... DIDN'T I, SIR?

OH...

ONCE YOU START COMPARING THE TWO DIFFERENT WORLDS TO SEE WHICH IS BETTER...

...THEN YOU'VE OVERSTEPPED YOUR BOUNDS AS A HUMAN.

IS THAT FEELING CLOSE TO HOW YOU REALLY FEEL ABOUT THE OTHER CHOICE YOU MADE?

IT'S THE GODS' JOB TO COMPARE AND WORRY ABOUT THAT. NOT OURS.

WE'VE ALL BEEN GIVEN ONE WORLD, AND WE WERE BUILT TO FIND HAPPINESS IN THAT ONE WORLD.

OH...

...OR WHAT'S IN THE OTHER WORLD.

SO YOU SEE? YOU SHOULDN'T WORRY ABOUT WHAT'S IN THE OTHER HAND...

I BELIEVED THAT MADE ME SPECIAL, THAT I COULD OVERCOME THE ODDS OF A HUNDRED MILLION CHOICES AND WIN MY HAPPINESS.

I... AM A WITCH WHO HAS LIVED A HUNDRED YEARS ACROSS COUNTLESS WORLDS.

BUT...

...WHEN IT COMES TO TAKING HOLD OF HAPPINESS... I'VE BEEN WORSE AT IT THAN ANYONE.

...FAR FROM BEING BETTER AT IT THAN EVERYONE ELSE...

...OR ELSE THEY'LL NEVER FIND HAPPINESS.

PEOPLE SHOULD LIVE THE LIFE THEY'VE BEEN GIVEN TO THE FULLEST...

I'M DONE BEING A WITCH.

.....

...I WILL LIVE IN THIS WORLD AS "RIKA FURUDE"!

GU (CLENCH)

...BUT...

MY WITCH SELF MAY EXIST IN SOME WORLD ON A HIGHER PLANE...

.....

RIKA, WE'LL BRING A GIFT FOR YOU WHEN WE VISIT TOMORROW.

IS THERE ANYTHING YOU'D LIKE TO EAT?

WELL, WE SHOULDN'T STAY HERE TOO LONG.

WE'LL LEAVE YOU ALONE FOR NOW.

...I PROMISED THAT WHEN I GOT BACK, I WOULD STUFF THE FRIDGE WITH CREAM PUFFS.

IN THE OTHER WORLD...

WHAT IS IT, SIR?

...SAY, HANYU.

I THINK THEY WERE SELLING SUPER-SPICY KIMCHI.

AREN'T THEY HAVING A KOREAN FOOD FAIR AT THE DEPARTMENT STORE IN GOGURA?

RIKA-CHAN LIKES SPICY FOOD, RIGHT?

!!

BUT SINCE THAT WAS A DREAM, I GUESS I'M OFF THE HOOK, RIGHT?

...SOME CREAM PUFFS, SIR.

I WANT...

UHH! UHH!

.....

HEH.

THEN I GUESS I'LL GO TO ANGEL MORT AND PICK SOME UP.

ARE YOU SURE YOU'RE NOT JUST GOING TO GAWK AT THE UNIFORMS, KE!ICHI-SAN?

.....!

...HANYU.

THANK YOU...

AH-HA-HA HA-HA!

YOU'RE WEL-COME!

RIKA...

WHEN I GET OUT OF THE HOSPITAL... THE FIRST THING I WANT TO DO IS VISIT MY PARENTS' GRAVES.

パタン…

PATAN (SHUT)

IT HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH BREAKING THE FRAG-MENT OR ANYTHING LIKE THAT.

I KNOW WHY I HAD TO KILL MY MOTHER TO COME BACK TO THIS WORLD.

I KNOW.

BY CHOOSING A WORLD WITHOUT MY MOTHER, I WAS, IN EFFECT, KILLING HER.

BUT IN CHOOSING EACH NEW WORLD, I WAS CHOOSING TO KILL MY MOTHER AGAIN AND AGAIN.

I...HADN'T FELT ANY GUILT UNTIL NOW.

YOU! I WANTED TO HELP ME REALIZE THAT... DIDN'T YOU?

SIGN: IRIE CLINIC

RIKA...

THANK YOU...FOR FIGURING IT OUT.

SUYA (ZZZ)

NOW I FINALLY FEEL LIKE I'VE ATONED, SIR.

THAT WAS WHERE I FELT I HAD WRONGED YOU THE MOST.

IT'S ALL RIGHT, RIKA.

YOUR HANDS ARE NOT STAINED WITH YOUR MOTHER'S BLOOD.

IT WAS ALL A DREAM ...

A DREAM THAT I SHOWED YOU IN A FIT OF MISCHIEVOUSNESS.

I WANT YOU TO BE ABLE TO THINK OF YOUR OWN HAPPINESS.

SO WHEN YOU WAKE FROM YOUR SLEEP, I WANT YOU TO HAVE FORGOTTEN ALL ABOUT IT.

FOR NOW...

...SLEEP DEEP AND SLEEP LONG.

GOOD NIGHT, RIKA.

DICE KILLING ARC

FIN

ABOUT THE "DICE KILLING ARC": THE POWER OF MEANINGFUL DAILY COMMUNICATION

ORIGINAL STORY, SUPERVISOR: RYUKISHI07

HELLO, I'M RYUKISHI07.

LOOKING BACK, I'M SUDDENLY STRUCK BY THE REALIZATION THAT IT'S BEEN FIVE YEARS SINCE WE BEGAN—THIS HAS BEEN A VERY LONG STORY. FOR THE TIME BEING, *HIGURASHI WHEN THEY CRY* REACHES ITS CONCLUSION IN THE "DICE KILLING ARC." FIRST, TO ALL OF YOU WHO READ THE MANGA, TO EVERYONE INVOLVED IN THIS PROJECT, AND SUZURAGI-SENSEI—THANK YOU VERY, VERY MUCH.

BACK WHEN I WAS WRITING THE SCRIPT FOR THE ORIGINAL, I DIDN'T HAVE ANY EXPERIENCE WRITING NOVELS. I CAME UP AGAINST MANY CHALLENGES, AND AT ONE POINT, I EVEN HAD TO STOP WRITING ALTOGETHER. NEVERTHELESS, THOUGH IMPERFECT, THE SERIES MADE IT FAR ENOUGH TO BE TURNED INTO A MANGA. I OWE IT ALL TO EVERYONE WHO SUPPORTED ME AND THE HELP OF MY FRIENDS. AS FOR THE "DICE KILLING ARC," ITS THEME IS DAILY COMMUNICATION.

I PRAY WITH ALL MY HEART THAT WE ALL RECOGNIZE THE OVERWHELMING SUPPORT WE GET FROM THE PEOPLE AROUND US AND THAT WE WILL TREASURE AND CULTIVATE THE POWER THAT COMES FROM THAT.

THANK YOU FOR STAYING WITH US ALL THIS TIME. I BELIEVE THE FUTURE THAT RIKA CHOSE FOR HERSELF WILL SURELY BE A HAPPY ONE. I THINK THAT WE ONLY LIVE ONCE, AND WE FACE LOTS OF BIG CHOICES AND DIFFICULT DECISIONS ON THE WAY. IF WE DON'T ALLOW OURSELVES TO BE CARRIED AWAY BY OUR SURROUNDINGS AND CHOOSE OUR OWN PATH—ONE THAT SUITS OUR NEEDS—THEN THAT IS THE RIGHT ANSWER. WE'VE EACH BEEN GIVEN OUR OWN LIFE, AND I WANT TO LIVE MINE TO THE FULLEST.

I AM TRULY GRATEFUL FOR THE BLESSING OF BEING ALLOWED TO WORK ON *HIGURASHI* FROM THE "ABDUCTED BY DEMONS ARC" TO THE "DICE KILLING ARC." IT WAS A LOT OF FUN DRAWING ALL THE *HIGURASHI* CHARACTERS AND THEIR MYRIAD EMOTIONS. THANK YOU TO EVERYONE WHO SUPPORTED ME, TO MY EDITOR WHO HELPED ME WITH THE WRITING, AND TO MY STAFF. WITH ALL OF YOUR HELP, WE MADE IT TO THE END. I HOPE THAT THIS ARC, WHERE RIKA-CHAN FIGHTS HER OWN BATTLE, WILL REACH BT-SAN TOO.

BT-SAN ONCE SAID TO ME THAT IT'S IMPORTANT TO KEEP RUNNING AT 70 PERCENT POWER. I DON'T THINK I'LL EVER FORGET THAT. ALTHOUGH SOMETIMES YOU HAVE TO GO AT 120 PERCENT TO TAKE HOLD OF AN OPPORTUNITY, AND YOU CAN CHOOSE TO KEEP UP THAT PACE. THERE ARE MANY DIFFERENT PATHS AND MANY DIFFERENT CHOICES.

I'M ROOTING FOR ALL OF YOU, THAT YOU WILL CREATE GREAT FUTURES. AND I'M LOOKING FORWARD TO 07TH EXPANSIONS'S FUTURE WORKS. I EXPECT BRILLIANT STORIES FILLED WITH EMOTION, SUSPENSE, AND TERROR—ALL KINDS OF THINGS TO SHAKE UP PEOPLE'S HEARTS. IT'S A BLESSING THAT I CAN LOOK FORWARD TO SOMETHING TWICE A YEAR, EVERY YEAR. BUT PLEASE TAKE CARE OF YOUR HEALTH.

THANK YOU FOR EVERYTHING. IF WE GET A CHANCE TO MEET AGAIN, I LOOK FORWARD TO IT!

KARIN SUZUKAGI

SPECIAL THANKS

-ORIGINAL STORY, SUPERVISOR-
RYUKISHI07-SAMA,
BT-SAMA,
YATAZAKURA-SAMA,
TOKIBI-SAMA,
TSUBAKI NARUSE-SAMA,
NEKOZAKURA-SAMA,
KAKUMU-SAMA

-MY EDITORS-
KOIZUMI-SAMA,
KUBOTA-SAMA

-MY STAFF-
SHIGETOMO TANAKURA-SAMA,
NAYU Y-SAMA,
NIWAKO-SAMA,
NODA-SAMA,
TOMOKA FURUTA-SAMA

AND YOU!

HIGURASHI
WHEN THEY CRY
DICE KILLING ARC

RYUKISHI07
Karin Suzuragi

Translation: Alethea Nibley and Athena Nibley

Lettering: Abigail Blackman and Stephanie Lee

This book is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places, and incidents are the product of the author's imagination or are used fictitiously. Any resemblance to actual events, locales, or persons, living or dead, is coincidental.

Higurashi WHEN THEY CRY Dice Killing Arc
©RYUKISHI07/07th Expansion ©2011 Karin Suzuragi/SQUARE ENIX CO., LTD. First published in Japan in 2011 by SQUARE ENIX CO., LTD. English translation rights arranged with SQUARE ENIX CO., LTD. and Hachette Book Group through Tuttle-Mori Agency, Inc.

Translation ©2014 by SQUARE ENIX CO., LTD.

All rights reserved. In accordance with the U.S. Copyright Act of 1976, the scanning, uploading, and electronic sharing of any part of this book without the permission of the publisher is unlawful piracy and theft of the author's intellectual property. If you would like to use material from the book (other than for review purposes), prior written permission must be obtained by contacting the publisher at permissions@hbgusa.com. Thank you for your support of the author's rights.

Yen Press
Hachette Book Group
1290 Avenue of the Americas
New York, NY 10104

www.hachettebookgroup.com
www.yenpress.com

Yen Press is an imprint of Hachette Book Group, Inc. The Yen Press name and logo are trademarks of Hachette Book Group, Inc.

The publisher is not responsible for websites (or their content) that are not owned by the publisher.

First Yen Press ebook Edition: November 2014

ebook ISBN: 978-0-316-33650-5

App ISBN: 978-0-316-33651-2